

“Bethany beyond the Jordan” in Text, Tradition, and Historical Geography (*)

I. The Readings Βηθανία vs. Βηθαβαρά in John 1,28

In the mid-3rd century CE, Origen elected to read the site of Jesus’ baptism preserved in John 1,28 not as Bethany (ἐν Βηθανία), but as Bethabara (ἐν Βηθαβαρά), despite the fact that the former reading appeared “in nearly all” (σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι) of the manuscripts that he knew (*Comm. Jo.* 6.40.204 [PG 14, 269 §24])⁽¹⁾. Origen predicated this text-critical emendation on the complete absence in his day of any site named Bethany east of the Jordan.

Indeed, in his consideration of the contemporary textual exemplars, R. Riesner notes that a few major witnesses (e.g., Alexandrinus [A], Vaticanus [B], and Sinaiticus [Ⲛ]), as well as a few smaller manuscripts from the second and third centuries CE (P⁶⁶ and P⁷⁵, respectively), read Βηθανία, suggesting that this should be considered the “majority reading.” The “minority reading” Βηθαβαρά, as well as the many divergent forms thereof (e.g., Βιθαβερα, Βηθεβαρα, etc.), is attested by several manuscripts of more recent date⁽²⁾. Riesner deduces from the preservation of the more difficult Βηθανία⁽³⁾ in the more

(*) I owe my thanks to Shane Berg and George Parsenios, both good friends and colleagues, who read a draft of this paper and commented on it productively. It would, of course, be injudicious to blame them for any mistakes that remain.

(1) I use here the numbering system of the critical edition by C. BLANC, *Origène: Commentaire sur Saint Jean* (SC 157; Paris 1970) II. A similar decision to read Βηθαβαρά here was made by both John Chrysostom (*Hom. Jo.* 17.1 [PG 59, 108]), and Jerome (*Sit.* [PL 23, 931]); see R. RIESNER, *Bethanien jenseits des Jordan*. Topographie und Theologie im Johannes-Evangelium (Giessen – Basel 2002) 13; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel according to St. John* (New York 1982) I, 295-296.

(2) R. RIESNER, “Bethany Beyond the Jordan (John 1:28): Topography, Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel”, *TynBul* 38 (1987) 32-34; idem, *Bethanien*, 13-18, 43. For a catalogue of the “minority texts”, see W. WIEFEL, “Bethabara jenseits des Jordan (Joh. 1,28)”, *ZDPV* 83 (1967) 72-73.

(3) That Βηθανία is the *lectio difficilior* is an assessment in congruence with that of other New Testament critics; see, e.g., M. PICCIRILLO, “The Sanctuaries of the Baptism on the East Bank of the Jordan River”, *Jesus and Archaeology* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (Grand Rapids, MI 2006) 435; B.M. METZGER, “ἐν βηθανία ἐγένετο {C}”, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New

important witnesses that “in many instances there has been a conscious later alteration of the name of the place” from the original Βηθανία to the later Βηθαβαρά⁽⁴⁾. There is a general consensus among scholars that there is very little data that would speak in opposition to the primacy of Βηθανία, and although Riesner recognizes the value of the toponymic evidence provided by the Old Syriac and the other “minority” manuscripts, he ultimately concludes that this information points only to the existence of a “local tradition” in which the site of Jesus’ baptism was named Bethabara⁽⁵⁾.

Although it thus seems that Βηθανία is the original reading, two considerations mitigate the force of taking that reading as a historically accurate notice of the location of the Baptist’s ministry. First, Riesner cites a literary topos in John that would purportedly confirm this text-critical judgment of the priority of Βηθανία: namely, the fact that “in John’s Gospel Jesus’ way leads from Bethany [1,28; 10,40] to Bethany [11,1]”⁽⁶⁾. R. Fortna concurs implicitly with this literary judgment and is, I would argue, correct when he states that “if the reading of *Bethany* is correct, it is perhaps designed by John to provide a balance at the start of the ministry with the other Bethany where it ends...”⁽⁷⁾. In fact, Fortna’s recognition of the importance of locale in the fourth gospel, particularly with regard to the literary correspondence between the presumed Bethany of John 10,40 (based on the apparent reference to 1,28) and the Bethany of John 11, provides a serious caveat to claims that Βηθανία is actually the *lectio difficilior* in John 1,28. Although it is difficult to build a strong case for the textual priority of Βηθαβαρά in John 1,28, the redactional nature of that verse mitigates the claim to

York 1994) 199-200; C.K. BARRETT, *The Gospel according to St John* (London 1965) 146.

⁽⁴⁾ RIESNER, “Bethany”, 33.

⁽⁵⁾ Ibid., 33-34; and idem, *Bethanien*, 15, 36 (and bibliography in n. 79). RIESNER (*Bethanien*, 15) and R.G. CLAPP (“A Study of the Place-names Gergesa and Bethabara”, *JBL* 26 [1907] 62-83, esp. 76) point to the plurality of orthographic variants of Βηθαβαρά — as opposed to the relative paucity of variants of Βηθανία — to argue that the former name was inserted late and independently by a number of different copyists. RIESNER traces the confusion to the late insertion of a local tradition, while CLAPP credits Origen with the origination of the discrepancy.

⁽⁶⁾ RIESNER, “Bethany”, 33-34; and idem, *Bethanien*, 14, a judgment followed by PICCIRILLO, “Sanctuaries”, 438.

⁽⁷⁾ R.T. FORTNA, “Theological Use of Locale in the Fourth Gospel”, *Gospel Studies in Honor of Sherman Elbridge Johnson* (eds. M.H. SHEPHERD — E.C. HOBBS) (AThRSupp 3; London 1974) 68.

Βηθανία’s originality as well. Instead, it may be the case that John 1,28 is in fact the gospel writer’s own insertion⁽⁸⁾, through which he capitalized on the possibility of the present *inclusio*, substituting Βηθανία for an earlier, historically accurate tradition⁽⁹⁾. On this model, the late reading simply replaces a similarly constructed reading.

Second, Riesner’s dismissal of Bethabara as the disingenuous product of “local tradition” fails when we consider the actual breadth of philological evidence in support of Origen’s “minority” report. Origen (*Comm. Jo.* 6.40.206) provided as the Hebrew etymology of Βηθαβαρά the meaning “House of Preparation” (οἶκος κατασκευῆς). The “preparation”, he argues, was fitting for the forerunner of the Christ, who had been sent “to prepare his way before him” (κατασκευάσαι τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ). In this exegetical move, Origen is undoubtedly alluding to the citation of Mal 3,1a in Mk 1,2: ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου.

However, this citation preserves a paraphrasing allusion to the text of Malachi, which does not itself use the verb κατασκευάζω:

הנני שלח מלאכי ויבשרך לפני

ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ⁽¹⁰⁾ ἐξάποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται
ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου...

Nor does the verb appear in the LXX rendering of the related Mal 3,23-24 MT (=LXX 3,22-23; Eng. 4,4-5):

הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה הגדול והנורא

השׁוֹיב לב־אבות אֱלֹהִים

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν Ηλίαν τὸν Θεοσβίτην πρὶν ἔλθεῖν
ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανή, ὃς ἀποκαταστήσει
καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν...

(⁸) Ibid., 67; and idem, *The Gospel of Signs. A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 11; Cambridge 1970) 174; and below.

(⁹) At most, I would allow the position of B.F. BYRON’s “more liberal” scholars who “might claim that the author has ‘theologized’ the name for some reason or other but a Bethany east of the Jordan was what he wrote and what he meant” (“Bethany Across the Jordan or simply Across the Jordan”, *AusBR* 46 [1998] 38). See also G.L. PARSENIOS – J.M. HUTTON, “Bethany Beyond Jordan and the Theology of Landscape”, forthcoming.

(¹⁰) The word ἐγὼ appears only in the 3rd century Washington papyrus, and is omitted in LXX^b and LXX^c; the inflection of the following verb makes this minus text-critically irrelevant.

The verb κατασκευάζω is used in LXX^B in contexts of “creating” (ברא; Isa 40,28; 43,7), “fashioning” (חרש; Prov 6,14 [only in B²]), “forming” (יצר; Isa 45,7,9), “establishing” (בון *hitpolel*; Num 21,27), “making” (עשה; 2 Chr 32,5; Prov 23,5), and “refining” (צרף; Isa 40,19). Likewise, only once does LXX^B utilize the related form ἀποσκευάζω to render the Heb. verb פנה in the *piel* (Lev 14,36), but the context there demands that the nature of the “preparation” is one in which the leprous house is emptied.

Moreover, although there is a contextual basis for Origen’s connection between the site of the baptism and the “voice calling in the wilderness” as a voice calling for preparation, there seems to be little or no specific linguistic or textual connection to Isa 40,3, which Mark cites in the verse following the one just cited (Mk 1,3; also Matt 3,3; Lk 3,4). There, all three of the Synoptic Gospels render the verbs of MT Isa 40,3 with ἐτοιμάζω (“prepare”; פנה *piel* “prepare”; see the use of פנה in Mal 3,1) and ποιέω (“make”; ישר *piel* “make straight”). Thus, the etymology provided by Origen would, at first glance, appear to be unsupported by the textual and linguistic evidence.

Several scholars have recognized the difficulty of Origen’s etymology for βηθαβαρᾶ, and — with recourse to the twofold appearance of בית ברה in MT Judg 7,24 — suggested that reading ברא בית instead could provide a reasonable derivation for the name “House of Preparation”⁽¹¹⁾. In this line of thought, Origen reanalyzed (whether intentionally or unintentionally is unimportant) a known toponym בית ברה as בית עברה⁽¹²⁾. Indeed, as noted above, κατασκευάζω appears as the LXX^B rendering of Heb. ברא in Isa 40,28 and 43,7, and came in Christian patristic literature to have a similar semantic range⁽¹³⁾. But this solution seems tenuous to me, since it only obliquely handles the use of κατασκευάζω to render Heb. ברא (which, it must be pointed out, does not appear in *any* of the three OT passages noted above: Isa 40,3; Mal 3,1.23-24). Moreover, Mark’s notion of “preparation”, to which Origen obviously refers, can under no circumstances be immediately derived from the toponym בית ברה.

⁽¹¹⁾ E.g., BLANC, *Origène*, 286 n. 3; see also CLAPP, “Study”, 79 and nn. 61-62.

⁽¹²⁾ E.g., M.J. LAGRANGE, “Origène, la critique textuelle et la tradition topographique”, *RB* 4 (1895) 502-512, esp. 504-505; CLAPP, “Study”, 79-80 and n. 62; WIEFEL, “Bethabara”, 73-74; RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 35 and n. 77.

⁽¹³⁾ G.W.H. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford 1961) 718 s.v. “κατασκευάζω” and “κατασκευή”.

Finally, there is no other evidence in the OT that a locale named Beth Bara (בֵּית בָּרָא) ever existed. Thus, I am hesitant to follow this proposed emendation too readily. The solution seems to me to be far more of a textual and traditional nature than of an exegetical one, and is probably simpler than that suggested by Blanc and his predecessors.

Multiple Greek manuscripts (e.g., LXX^{AB}) at Exod 35,24 use the nominal form κατασκευή “preparation” to render Heb. עֲבֹדָה “work, preparation”, a word that is graphically similar to עֲבָרָה “crossing.” This potential for graphic confusion then should focus our attention on the only OT occurrence of the toponym Βαῖθαβαρᾶ, in Josh 18,22, where the LXX^B transcription renders MT בֵּית חֶעֱרָבָה “House of the Plain,” a city in the territory of Benjamin (cf. LXX^A Βηθαβαρά at Josh 15,61 and Βαῖθαβαρά at Josh 18,22; and LXX^B Βαῖθαβαρά at 15,6; 18,18)⁽¹⁴⁾. One might envision two more economical understandings of the evidence presented by these textual witnesses in combination with the tradition preserved by the minority texts at John 1,28 (e.g., Syr^{sc}, etc.).

In the first reconstruction, an original בֵּית עֲבָרָה “House of Passage”⁽¹⁵⁾ was inadvertently transcribed as בֵּית חֶעֱרָבָה in the MT of Josh 15,6.61; 18,22 (cf. also 18,18)⁽¹⁶⁾, and as בֵּית בָּרָה in MT of Judg 7,24⁽¹⁷⁾, while in Mark’s source it had become conflated with the graphically similar, but otherwise unknown, בֵּית עֲבָרָה. Graphically represented, this would appear as:

⁽¹⁴⁾ Eusebius (*Onom.* 50.21 nr. 233) lists a Βηθαβαρά, but describes it only as “in the regions near the uninhabitable area” (ἐν τοῖς περὶ τὴν ἀοίκητον), following Symmachus; translation from the convenient recent edition with Greek and Latin text, and English translation: Eusebius, *Onomasticon. The Place Names of Divine Scripture* (eds. R.S. NOTLEY – Z. SAFRAI) (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 9; Boston – Leiden 2005) 52.

⁽¹⁵⁾ For the history of this etymology of Βηθαβαρᾶ, see RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 35, and bibliography there.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Note the similar instances of metathesis (i.e., Βηθαβαρᾶ) that occurred in manuscripts of Origen’s *Comm. Jo.* and in LXX^{sch} Syr^{hmg}; METZGER, “ἐν βηθανίᾳ ἐγένετο {C}”, 200 n. 6; WIEFEL, “Bethabara”, 72; G. L. PARSENIOS, “Bethany”, *NIDB* I, 436-437; RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 43; LAGRANGE, “Origène”, 505.

⁽¹⁷⁾ W. BORÉE, *Die alten Ortsnamen Palästinas* (Leipzig 1930) 76 n. 5; although cf. J.K. LOTT, “Beth-Barah”, *ABD* I, 682-683.

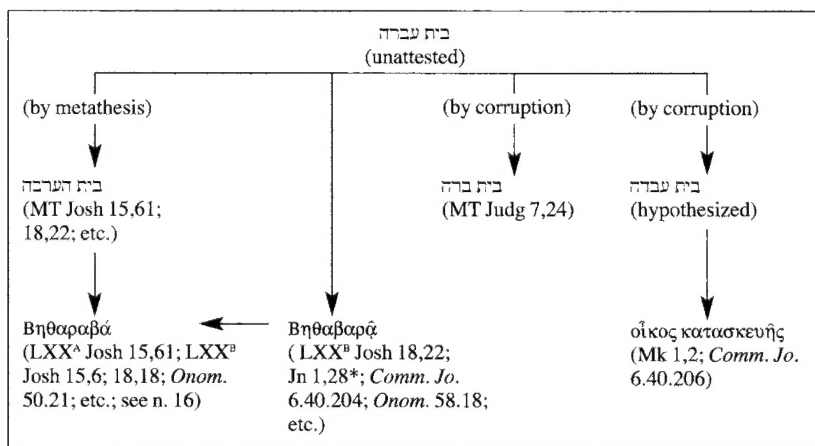


Fig. 1 – Evolutionary Model #1: Textual and Traditional development from an original locale named Bethabara.

The second solution, closely related and similarly dependent on textual and traditional corruption, would suggest that an original **בית (ה)ערבה** was misanalyzed as **בית עבררה**, which was then corrupted into **בית ברה**:

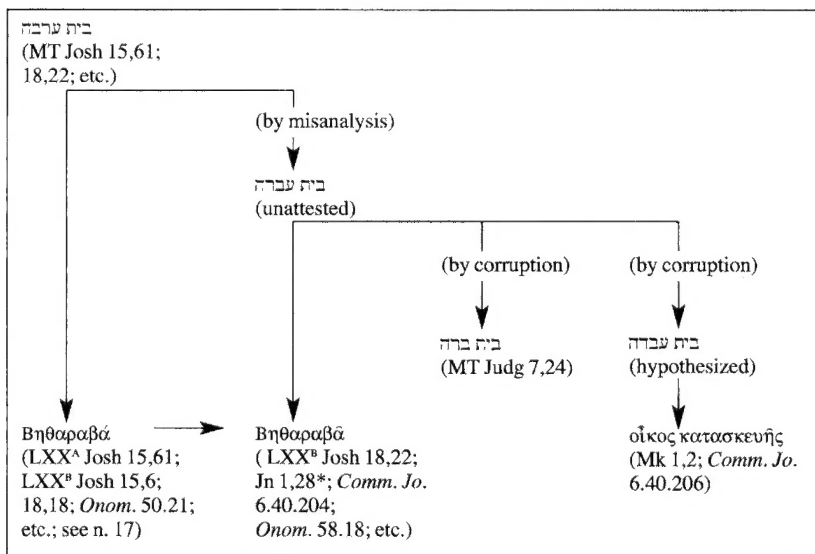


Fig. 2 – Evolutionary Model #2: Textual and Traditional development from an original locale named Beth-Araba.

In either case, it is not Origen's philological skills that should be blamed for the confusion, but rather the interpretive tradition preserved by Mark⁽¹⁸⁾. That tradition connected a corrupted toponymic antecedent found in the general location of the baptism (i.e., בית עברדה instead of the proper בית עברדה) with the OT passages that were theologically significant for Mark's presentation of that event (Isa 40,3; Mal 3,1.23-24). That tradition carried as part of its baggage a noun (κατασκευῆ) the verbal counterpart of which (κατασκευάζω) was not used in the OG rendering of any of those passages, but which Mark was able to use as a passable, albeit imperfect, rendering of the verb פנה used in Mal 3,1 and Isa 40,3. The interpretive contrivance, then, is Mark's. Admittedly, this does not, of course, explain why Origen — who was in this model only the recipient of what might be considered an authentic toponymic tradition Βηθαβαρᾶ, and not the originator of a local tradition — could etymologize the Greek form of that toponym, which clearly preserves the *rho* as an accurate rendering of Heb. *resh*, with a word (κατασκευῆ) that had been used to translate Heb. עברדה. This discrepancy may perhaps be chalked up to Origen's own exegetical interpretation in an attempt to draw together the received traditions, or even simply to an injudicious use of sources. However, this faulty etymology does not immediately impugn the reading Βηθαβαρᾶ provided by Origen as inferior to the degree that proponents of the reading Βηθανία in John 1,28 would claim.

In short, reading Βηθανία in John 1,28 as a historically accurate piece of information is problematic on a number of levels. First, the verse itself seems to be an addition by the gospel writer that rearranges the account received from his source, the Signs Source. If the gospel writer did indeed write Βηθανία originally, it can under no circumstances be used as a historical datum without careful scrutiny. Second, there is some slim reconstructable textual support for the preservation of a tradition concerning the existence of a settlement

⁽¹⁸⁾ Among the major commentaries, there are few explicit attempts to explain Mark's use of the verb κατασκευάζω: e.g., A.Y. COLLINS, *Mark. A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2007) 133, 135-136; M.E. BORING, *Mark. A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville, KY 2006) 34-36; R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids, MI 2002) 60-64; J. MARCUS, *Mark 1-8. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New York 1999) 142-143, 147-149; R.A. GUELICH, *Mark 1-8:26* (WBC 34A; Dallas, TX 1989) 11; C.S. MANN, *Mark. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; Garden City 1986) 195; V. TAYLOR, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London 1966) 153.

named בית עבררה located on or near the Jordan, and possibly for a related interpretive tradition preserved in Mk 1,2-3, which was then picked up by Origen. Therefore, while the priority of the reading Βηθαβαρᾶ in John 1,28 may remain doubtful⁽¹⁹⁾, it has at least been salvaged as a remote possibility. On the other hand, the reading Βηθανία, which may have arisen under literary pressure from the symbolic movement of Jesus to Bethany in John 11, should be problematized to a greater extent than it typically has been. Whether the writer of the Fourth Gospel wrote Βηθαβαρᾶ or not, only a location somewhere in the southern part of the Jordan River valley can have been intended⁽²⁰⁾. But where exactly was that locale? Setting aside the Bethany/Bethabara question for the moment, the following section attempts to answer that question.

II. The Itinerary of John 11 in Redaction-Critical Consideration

In his attempts to determine the location of John's "Bethany beyond the Jordan," Riesner provides an overview of previous scholarship⁽²¹⁾. The locale has been alternately associated with: a) sites in the Transjordan (Peraea) well removed from the course of the Jordan River, such as Beth Nimrah (Num 32,36; Josh 13,27; cf. Isa 15,6; Jer 48,34; modern *T. el-Bleibil* or *T. Nimrīn*)⁽²²⁾ and Betonim (Josh 13,26; modern *H. Baṭneh*)⁽²³⁾; b) the more familiar Bethany near Jerusalem

⁽¹⁹⁾ Cf. METZGER's note ("ἐν βηθανία ἐγένετο {C}", 200) that "if Βηθαβαρᾶ were original, then there is no adequate reason why it should have been altered to βηθανία".

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. PICIRILLO's enigmatic provision ("Sanctuaries", 443), that "there are two topographic realities that do not exclude each other — Bethabara at the river Jordan and Bethany at the spring of Wadi Kharrar..."

⁽²¹⁾ The following survey is based on RIESNER's much more thorough presentation of and bibliography for the various arguments ("Bethany", 34-43; idem, *Bethanien*, 43-56).

⁽²²⁾ F.F. BRUCE, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI 1983) 51, 66, n. 45; RIESNER ("Bethany", 39; *Bethanien*, 48) points to the manifold problems with such an identification, however, including the difficulty of reading the desired βαθαναβαρᾶ in any of the textual witnesses; the presence of Βηθενναβρίς in Josephus (*B.J.* 4.420 [=4.8.4]), which would have been available to Origen as an option; and finally, Eusebius's inclusion of Βηθνεμράν (*Onom.* 44.16-18), lacking any mention of the baptism.

⁽²³⁾ Cf. RIESNER for bibliography on other localizations in Peraea (*Bethanien*, 46-48) and for counter-arguments to the sites listed here ("Bethany", 39-40; *Bethanien*, 49-50).

(Jn 11,1.18), which was "opposite" the location on the Jordan at which John had formerly baptized⁽²⁴⁾; c) sites much further north than suggested by the topography assumed in John, such as the Abarah Ford (*Maḥādat* 'Abāra) northeast of Beth Shean⁽²⁵⁾, the city of Bethsaida, and a site named *et-Tell* north of the Sea of Galilee⁽²⁶⁾; and d) the region to the east of the Sea of Galilee, Batanaea⁽²⁷⁾ (biblical Bashan). Although the first several suggestions are difficult and require strained logic to support their conclusions, Riesner presents detailed argumentation for this last solution to the problem, and concludes that "Bethany beyond the Jordan" refers to Batanaea on the basis of the geographical implications of the itinerary in John 11, the time-plan in John 1–2, and the various names of the Galileans whom Jesus meets in John 1⁽²⁸⁾. The lynchpin of this argument is the implied itinerary of Jesus' movement from "the place where John had been baptizing formerly" (τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης τὸ πρῶτον βαπτίζων; John

⁽²⁴⁾ P. PARKER, "Bethany Beyond Jordan", *JBL* 74 (1955) 260; see also BYRON, "Bethany", 36-54 for a similar reading of the verse. RIESNER rejects PARKER's suggestion because it fails to deal adequately with similar occurrences of πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου in John 3,26 and 10,40, which clearly indicate a location on the eastern side of the Jordan ("Bethany", 34-35); see also FORTNA, "Locale", 67. Ultimately, PARKER's analysis is unconvincing, and although BYRON's association of the baptism with the motif of Joshua crossing into the Promised Land is surely correct (see, e.g., J.M. HUTTON, "Topography, Biblical Traditions, and Reflections on John's Baptism of Jesus", *Proceedings of the Second Princeton-Prague Symposium* [ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH] [Grand Rapids, MI, forthcoming]), it does not at all follow that the phrase "across the Jordan" (πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου) ought to be read from an easterly perspective, as BYRON argues. The phrase seems most likely to be a literal translation of Heb. מֵעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן (/ לַיַּרְדֵּן) ("the other side of the Jordan"), the referent of which is ambivalent and entirely dependent on context. Clearly, the phrase designates the western bank in Num 32,32; Deut 3,20.25; etc., but the eastern side in Num 35,14; Deut 1,1.5; 3,8; 4,46, etc., and remains ambiguous without further qualification in Num 22,1; 32,19; 34,15; Deut 4,41.47.49.

⁽²⁵⁾ Neither LAGRANGE ("Origène", 510) nor H. RIX ("Notes Taken on a Tour in Palestine in the Spring of 1901", *PEFQS* [1903] 159-162) was able to verify the existence of the name in the area; instead, RIX notes that the ford went by the name *Hammud*, or simply *Maḥāda* ("ford"). Cf. also RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 50-51.

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. however, RIESNER ("Bethany", 42; *Bethanien*, 52-53), who catalogues the constellation of typographical and logical errors that permitted these faulty identifications.

⁽²⁷⁾ E.g., B. PIXNER, *Wege des Messias und Stätten der Urkirche* (ed. R. RIESNER) (Giessen – Basel 1991) 173-174; RIESNER "Bethany", 29-63; and idem, *Bethanien*, 54-82.

⁽²⁸⁾ RIESNER, "Bethany", 43-48; idem, *Bethanien*, 71-77.

10,40) to Bethany near Jerusalem (Jn 11,1.17-18). Riesner adduces several pieces of data that, when viewed in light of each other, seem to narrow the possibilities of Bethany beyond the Jordan's location:

- The traditional location of Bethany beyond the Jordan in the *Wādi el-Ḥarrār* just east of the *Maḥāḍat Haḡla* (see below) lies only a day's travel away from Jerusalem.
- When the messengers arrive, Jesus addresses Lazarus' "illness" (ἀσθενεία; John 11,4), already anticipating Lazarus' death. Yet, it is only two days later, immediately before leaving that Jesus seems to have knowledge of Lazarus' death (vv. 6.11.13). Accordingly, the death of Lazarus "must...be reckoned from the departure of Jesus from Bethany beyond the Jordan," argues Riesner⁽²⁹⁾.
- Riesner concludes that the notice that "Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days" (τέσσαρας ἤδη ἡμέρας ἔχοντα ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ; v. 17) upon Jesus' arrival in Bethany means that the movement from Bethany beyond Jordan to Bethany near Jerusalem entailed four complete days of travel. Since a day's march was approximately 30-40 km⁽³⁰⁾, Bethany beyond Jordan must lie *ca.* 150 km from Jerusalem⁽³¹⁾.

Although painstakingly argued, Riesner's solution suffers from a multitude of logical errors.

First, the assumption that Jesus' statement of Lazarus' death and his departure for Bethany are necessarily coincident is negated by the theology of John's Gospel. As W.H. Cadman has pointed out (and as Riesner himself quoted), "In allowing Lazarus to die, [Jesus] was providing occasion for the revelation of himself as ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (11:25)"⁽³²⁾. The tarrying of two days is intended by Jesus as a guarantee that there will be work to be done upon his arrival in Bethany. Therefore, Lazarus may have died immediately after Jesus' receipt of the message (or, even before, if we may presume human limitations to Jesus' knowledge), and the journey's duration need not

⁽²⁹⁾ PIXNER, *Wege*, 170-171; RIESNER, "Bethany", 44; idem, *Bethanien*, 72.

⁽³⁰⁾ See RIESNER, "Bethany", 44 n. 84; idem, *Bethanien*, 73 and sources cited there, including Mishnah (*Ta'an* 1.3), Talmud (*bPes* 93b).

⁽³¹⁾ RIESNER, "Bethany", 44-45.

⁽³²⁾ W.H. CADMAN, "The Raising of Lazarus (John 10,40-11,53)", *TU* 73 (1959) 423-434, esp. 426, cited by RIESNER, "Bethany", 44; idem, *Bethanien*, 72. For a more complete discussion of the complexity of John 11, see F.J. MOLONEY, "Can Everyone Be Wrong? A Reading of John 11:1-12:18", *Id.*, *The Gospel of John. Text and Context* (Boston – Leiden 2005) 214-240, esp. 219-222.

be reckoned from the exact time of Lazarus' death, but rather possibly as beginning two days after that event.

Second, as noted above, several ancient sources provide the rough figure of 30-40 km (= ca. 18.5-25 miles) as a full day's travel for a band of healthy men. Although this figure provides a reasonable gauge for heuristic purposes, it does not take into account elevation gain and loss. A common contemporary formula for calculating pace while hiking and backpacking is to divide the number of miles by two, then to add an extra hour for each one thousand feet (ca. 300 m) climbed⁽³³⁾. This formula, moreover, does not take into account the extra time needed to descend steeply graded trails — an added consideration, if Jesus and his disciples were descending from the Transjordanian plateau. The additional time required for a net elevation loss from Bashan to the Jordan Valley and the corresponding elevation gain from the Jordan Valley to Jerusalem are data — admittedly, a relatively small proportion of a four-day journey, but a significantly greater proportion of a two day journey — which Riesner has not taken fully into account.

Third, and most destructive to Riesner's reconstructed time-line, is the textual history of the Gospel of John, and that book's dependence on an earlier Signs Source, as already noted above⁽³⁴⁾. Riesner declared that the source division of John is "höchst problematisch"⁽³⁵⁾ and dismissed Fortna's findings rather cavalierly:

Manchmal müssen auch so versierte Literarkritiker wie Professor Fortna ... sich mit trivialen Fragen wie der Topographie befassen. Und gelegentlich sind dabei die Ergebnisse bemerkenswert. Bethanien jenseits des Jordan mag nicht existiert haben, vielleicht hat es nicht einmal Bethanien geheißt, aber auf alle Fälle lag es im Süden!

However, this comment too quickly dismisses Fortna's argument. Working without the recognition made above that the use of κατασκευάζω in Mk 1,2 may preserve an authentic tradition concerning the geographic coincidence of the baptismal site with the toponym עבריה בית (which had become בית עבריה in a tradition preserved in Mark's

⁽³³⁾ E.g., K. BERGER, *Hiking and Backpacking. A Complete Guide* (Trailside Series; New York 1995) 31.

⁽³⁴⁾ FORTNA, *Gospel of Signs*; and idem, "Locale". Cf. recently H. THYEN, "Liegt dem Johannesevangelium eine Semeia-Quelle zugrunde?" *Studien zum Corpus Iohanneum* (WUNT 214; Tübingen 2007) 443-452; and the larger criticism of the Semeia Hypothesis as a whole by G. VAN BELLE, *The Signs Source in the Fourth Gospel. Historical Survey and Critical Evaluation of the Semeia Hypothesis* (BETL 116; Leuven 1994) esp. 370-377.

⁽³⁵⁾ RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 43.

source, yielding οἶκος κατασκευῆς for Origen), it would have been impossible for Fortna to fully ground his southern localization of the presumed locale Bethabara. But this recognition, combined with Fortna's detailed look at the likely textual development of the Gospel of John, calls into question Riesner's hard-fought position.

Fortna has, in my opinion, convincingly shown that the Gospel of John's topographic notices all work towards the gospel writer's theological schema⁽³⁶⁾. Topographic notices, while theologically meaningful in the Gospel, remain a product of redaction and therefore potentially unreliable as a historically verisimilitudinous itinerary of Jesus' movements without further critical study. The case at hand is one such example of a relatively minor textual redaction effected by the author that has led to significant topographical reorganization of Jesus' movements. This difficulty seems to have gone unrecognized by all those who would construct an itinerary unproblematically on the basis of John 1–2⁽³⁷⁾, and particularly on John 11: because the notice just before the Lazarus episode (John 11) places Jesus at that “place where John had been baptizing formerly” (τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης τὸ πρῶτον βαπτίζων; John 10,40), most scholars — including Riesner (and even Fortna himself!)⁽³⁸⁾ — have assumed that Jesus was at Bethany beyond the Jordan when he received word of Lazarus' illness. But the text provides only the description of the location as “across the Jordan”: Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν πάλιν πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου εἰς τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης τὸ πρῶτον βαπτίζων... (Jn 10,40).

The phrase πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου is used only twice elsewhere in the Gospel of John, respectively, 1,28 and 3,26. Fortna judged the first of these verses (1,28) to be a Johannine addition to a testimonial about Jesus' nature (1,19–34) taken over wholly from the Signs Source⁽³⁹⁾. That source, which did not specify the locale in which the Baptist's testimonial took place, seems to have assumed that this “introduction to the signs was set, like the first four of them, in the north”⁽⁴⁰⁾. The

⁽³⁶⁾ FORTNA, “Locale”, 58–95.

⁽³⁷⁾ E.g., M.-É. BOISMARD – A. LAMOUILLE, *Synopse des Quartes Évangiles III. L'Évangile de Jean* (Paris ²1987) 99–100, followed by both PIXNER, *Wege*, 171–172; and RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 73–76.

⁽³⁸⁾ FORTNA, “Locale”, 78: “Now...he withdraws from Judea...to the Baptist's original place of activity — presumably the Bethany of 1:28, where Jesus had first appeared” (emphasis added).

⁽³⁹⁾ Ibid., 67; see also FORTNA, *Gospel of Signs*, 174.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ FORTNA, “Locale”, 67–68.

gospel writer has, then, artificially shifted the geographic location of the episode, presumably so that it is in conformity with the Synoptic Gospels' location of the baptism in the wilderness of Judea. Fortna then hypothesizes that the following episode (i.e., John 1,35-49) was, in fact, introduced by what is now John 3,23-24: "John was also baptizing at Aenon near Salem..." (ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν Αἰνὼν ἐγγὺς τοῦ Σαλείμ...)⁽⁴¹⁾. If Fortna's hypothesis is correct — and I believe it is — that short statement of the Baptist's ministry can be taken as a localization of Jesus' baptism (according to the Signs Source) not at the Jordan River, but rather at Aenon⁽⁴²⁾. This locale, to which I return briefly below, corresponds quite well with the itinerary in John 11, if we assume that the movement from "the place where John had been baptizing formerly" to Bethany took two days.

Once the author of the Gospel of John had shifted the "Aenon" notice to its current position (3,23), and inserted the "Bethany" notice (1,28), it would have been very easy to add the phrase *πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* in both 3,26 and 10,40 in order to tie together all three verses locating the baptismal site on the eastern side of the Jordan. Indeed, excising the phrase from each of the latter two verses (3,26; 10,40) yields a completely reasonable remaining syntactical structure:

“ῥαββί, ὃς ἦν μετὰ σοῦ, ὃ σὺ μεμαρτύρηκας...”
(John 3,26)

Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν πάλιν εἰς τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης τὸ πρῶτον βαπτίζων...
(John 10,40)

Had Riesner been looking for a locale named Αἰνὼν located about two days' travel from Jerusalem instead of a locale named Βηθανία four days' travel from the same city, he would have found it quite easily. The placement of the baptismal site at the more northerly Αἰνὼν also alleviates the tensions that Riesner adduced in John 1⁽⁴³⁾.

Because Riesner's identification of Βηθανία fails, the only serious contender for the baptismal site is the traditional placement of Jesus' baptism at the *el-Magtas/Haḡla* series of fords over the Jordan River,

⁽⁴¹⁾ Ibid., 68; idem, *Gospel of Signs*, 179-180.

⁽⁴²⁾ Cf. recently H. THYEN, "Ainon bei Salim als Taufort des Johannes (Joh 3,23)", *Studien zum Corpus Iohanneum* (WUNT 214; Tübingen 2007) 467-478.

⁽⁴³⁾ RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 73-77.

directly east of Jericho⁽⁴⁴⁾. This site has the advantage both of a long history of traditional recognition (over against the tepid recognition of Bashan)⁽⁴⁵⁾, and of providing a rationale for John's enigmatic textual transfer of Jesus' baptism from its original location in the Signs Source at Aenon to a site compatible with that named by the Synoptic Gospels. Finally, we have seen that the traditional data preserved — perhaps even unintentionally — by Origen suggest a location in the Jordan Valley, near the biblical ביתהערבה.

Of the *el-Mağtas* or *Hağla* ford as the historical referent of the baptismal site named in John 1,28, Riesner concludes only that the information available in the textual witness to the reading Βηθαβαρᾱ “speaks for the acceptance of a local tradition. But when we attempt to discover the place referred to in John 1,28 on the basis of the statements of Origen, we find that more problems emerge than a solution”⁽⁴⁶⁾. Riesner is undoubtedly correct in his assessment that Origen's solution is replete with problems, but a historical-geographical study of biblical and post-biblical data points the way toward a more firm location of the Baptist's ministry.

III. Biblical and Post-biblical Traditions on the Location of Bethabara

Although Origen did not specify the exact location of Bethabara in his *Commentary on John*, early Christian pilgrim and geographic literature contains a few indications that the traditional site of the town was to be located near the *el-Mağtas* and *Hağla* fords. In 333 CE the Pilgrim of Bourdeaux claimed to have been shown at a site on the Jordan five miles above the river's outlet into the Dead Sea “the place where the Lord was baptized by John, and above the far bank at the same place is the hillock from which Elijah was taken up to heaven”⁽⁴⁷⁾.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ I do not discount the possible validity of the tradition locating the site ca. 2 km from the Jordan River in the *Wādī el-Harrār*; see, e.g., RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 21, 23; H. GESE, “Der Johannesprolog”, *Zur Biblischen Theologie*. Alttestamentliche Vorträge (BET 78; Munich 1977) 152-201, here 198 n. 29. Such a location would not significantly affect the argument made here.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ For a representative bibliography of those who locate the Bethany of John 1,28 at the *el-Mağtas* and *Hağla* fords, see RIESSNER, *Bethanien*, 40 n. 95.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ RIESNER, “Bethany”, 33-34.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ *Itinerarium Burdigalense* in *Itineraria et alia geographica* (CCSL 175; Tournhout 1965) 19: Inde ad Iordane, ubi Dominus a Iohanne baptizatus est, milia quinque. Ibi est locus super flumen, monticulus in illa ripa, ubi raptus est

Eusebius of Caesarea picked up Origen’s description, glossing Βηθαβαρά as “beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing” (ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων, πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου; *Onom.* 58.18 nr. 290)⁽⁴⁸⁾. Jerome (*Sit.* [PL 23, 931]) followed suit, adding relatively little to the description⁽⁴⁹⁾, although he did preserve the reading “Bethany” in the Vulgate. Unfortunately, none of these sources distinguishes the location of the site any more specifically, although each attests to a tradition of Bethabara as an actual locale somewhere near the Jordan River, as a text-critical examination of John 1,28 and the related traditions suggests (see above).

This dearth of evidence for a more precise localization of Bethabara was alleviated with the discovery of the Madaba Mosaic Map (ca. 560). In contradistinction to John 1,28, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, all of whom apparently situated the locale on the eastern side of the Jordan River, the Madaba Map identifies that site (“Bethabara of Saint John of [?] the Baptism”; Βεθαβαρα/ τὸ τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου/ τοῦ βαπτίσματος) on the river’s western bank⁽⁵⁰⁾. This location of Bethabara west of the Jordan on the Madaba Mosaic Map preserves the tradition of that site’s location first recorded by Theodosius (ca. 530; *De situ terrae sanctae* 20)⁽⁵¹⁾, but the tradition itself “must have been

Helias in caelum [598.1-3]. I use the translation here of J. WILKINSON, *Egeria’s Travels to the Holy Land* (Warminster 1981) 161, §598. Since at least the Byzantine period, that site on the eastern bank has been known as *Ġebel Mār Elyās* (“the Hill of Lord Elijah”); *ibid.*, 161 n. 7. However, it is quite possible that the pilgrim was citing a prechristian tradition, according to RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 21. See recently R. KHOURI, “Where John Baptized: Bethany beyond the Jordan,” *BAR* 31 (2005) 34-43, esp. 41.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Eusebius adds: καὶ δείκνυται ὁ τόπος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ πλείους τῶν ἀδελφῶν εἰς ἔτι νῦν τὸ λουτρὸν φιλοτιμοῦνται λαμβάνειν, “The place is shown where even today many of the brothers still endeavor to receive a bath.” Translation that of NOTLEY – SAFRAI, *Onomasticon*, 59.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Jerome: Bethabara trans Jordanem, ubi Joannes in poenitentiam baptizabat, unde et usque hodie plurimi de fratribus, hoc est de numero credentium, ibi renasci cupientes vitali gurgite baptizantur [PL 23, 931]. See also M. AVI-YONAH, *The Madaba Mosaic Map with Introduction and Commentary* (Jerusalem 1954) 38 nr. 7.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ *Ibid.*, 38-39 nr. 7, pls. 1-2.

⁽⁵¹⁾ In CCSL 175, 121-122. That Theodosius found Bethabara on the west side of the river is the judgment of AVI-YONAH (*Madaba Mosaic Map*, 39), who argues this datum based on the fact that Theodosius connects the site with El-isha’s fountain. Cf., however, WIEFEL (“Bethabara”, 76-77), who argues for the site’s location on the eastern bank, as Theodosius had approached from Livias.

earlier”⁽⁵²⁾. Despite the discrepancy between these variant locations of Bethabara, one might assume a quite simple solution to the problem of Bethabara in either of the models proposed above: the toponym “Bethabara” — whether original or the result of phonological metathesis motivated by etiological misanalysis — did not refer to a settlement per se, but rather specifically to the fords over the Jordan River (hence, the plural form τὰ Βηθαβαρᾶ given by Origen [*Comm. Jo.* 6.40.205])⁽⁵³⁾, currently spanning about 2 km of river length from *el-Mağtas* (the current location commemorating the baptism near St. John’s Convent and *Qaṣr al-Yahūd*) to the *Maḥāḍat Ḥaḡla* (the formerly recognized site of the baptism *ca.* 1.5 km further south)⁽⁵⁴⁾. This proposal not only accounts for the paucity of contemporaneous archaeological remains at the proposed site on the Jordan River, but could explain why “Bethany” was preserved in the most reliable manuscripts of John: there was no settlement Bethabara to which that name referred.

Yet, the location of the ford over the Jordan named Bethabara remains relatively fixed by the Madaba Mosaic Map. The site is just north of the outlet of the Jordan River into the Dead Sea, and to the southeast of Jericho. Nearby on the western bank one finds both Gilgal “and the twelve stones” (Γαλγαλα τὸ καὶ Δωδεκαλίθον), and the “[Threshing-] Floor of Atad, now Bethagla” (Ἀλων Ἀταθ ἡ νῦν/Βηθαγλα)⁽⁵⁵⁾. Just over the river, on the eastern bank, is found “Aenon now Sapsaphas” (Αἰνων ἔνθα/νῦν ὁ Σαπσάφας)⁽⁵⁶⁾. It is clear that the map here preserves a tradition in which the Aenon at which John baptized (Jn 3,23) was located at or very near the Bethabara ford; this locale is named as the baptismal site by the Pilgrim of Bourdeaux (see above), as well as a number of later Christian writers⁽⁵⁷⁾. The map also preserves the traditional location of John’s ministry — and, as discussed above, the locale at which the Signs Source may have placed

Only with the testimony of the Bourdeaux Pilgrim, argues WIEFEL, do we hear of the site’s commemoration on the western bank.

⁽⁵²⁾ AVI-YONAH, *Madaba Mosaic Map*, 39. The Pilgrim of Piacenza (*ca.* 570) mentions commemorative buildings on the western bank as well; *Itinerarium* 12 in CCSL 175, 135-136; RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 25-32.

⁽⁵³⁾ Cf. RIESNER, “Bethany”, 38; idem, *Bethanien*, 36.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ See already RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 36-37.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ AVI-YONAH, *Madaba Mosaic Map*, 36-37 nr. 5, and 39 nr. 8, pls. 1-2.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Ibid., 37 nr. 6, pls. 1-2.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ For a list, see *ibid.*, 37 nr. 6.

Jesus' baptism before the gospel writer brought the source into conformity with the Synoptics — at "Aenon near Salim" (Jn 3,23) further to the north (Αἰνὼν ἢ ἐγγύς τοῦ Σάλημ), about 8 miles south of Scythopolis (biblical Beth Shean)⁽⁵⁸⁾. That more northern site was visited by the pilgrim Egeria in the late 4th century⁽⁵⁹⁾, and may have been a conditioning factor in John Lightfoot's location of Bethabara at the Abarah Ford to the northeast of Beth Shean⁽⁶⁰⁾.

Riesner rightfully criticized Lightfoot's location of Bethabara, stating that "today one usually accepts the location as being a region much further to the south (somewhere opposite the mouth of the Jabbok)"⁽⁶¹⁾. But if we anchor Bethabara to the location of בית הערבה in Josh 15,6.61; 18,22 (cf. also 18,18), we find that even the placement of the locale at the mouth of the Jabbok is too far north. In those verses, the city serves as a waypoint in the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (15,6), and is claimed by both Judah (15,61) and Benjamin (18,22). Indeed, it would appear that the Gideon narrative, in which בית ברָה appears (Judg 7,24 *bis*), entails a crossing near the mouth of the Jabbok, since Sukkoth and Penuel (Judg 8,5-9) lie in the area surrounding the alluvial plain of the Jabbok⁽⁶²⁾. But this does not mean that seizing "the waters as far as Beth Barah, and the Jordan" (Judg

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ibid., 35-36 nr. 1, pl. 1.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Ibid., citing the itinerary of Egeria (15.1); see WILKINSON, *Egeria's Travels*, 110-111 and map on p. 109. Cf., however, J. MURPHY-O'CONNOR, "John the Baptist and Jesus: History and Hypotheses", *NTS* 36 (1990) 359-374, esp. 364-365 (quote from p. 365), who identified Aenon with the one km line comprising five springs "[o]n the eastern slope of Mount Gerizim" near to the modern village Sālim, about 4.5 km east of T. Balāṭa (biblical Shechem).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ J. LIGHTFOOT (*Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae in Quattuor Evangelistas* [ed. J.B. CARPZOV] [Leipzig 1670] 911-916, subsequently published in English as *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae*. Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations [Oxford 1859] I, 327-333, esp. 332-333, cited in RIESNER, "Bethany", 41) also "identified Bethabara with the Bethbarah of Judges 7:24" — a judgment with which I have concurred above — but the location so far north is inconsistent with all the evidence for the location of Bethabara, and can only be related to the existence of a *Maḥāḏat 'Abāra* in the vicinity of Beth Shean; see D.A. DORSEY (*The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel* [Baltimore 1991] 111), who notes that the ford was, in periods after the Iron Age, the most important ford of the region; and C.R. CONDER — H.H. KITCHENER, *The Survey of Western Palestine* (London 1882) II, 79.

⁽⁶¹⁾ RIESNER, "Bethany", 41; see also idem, *Bethanien*, 51-52; and Y. AHA-RONI — M. AVI-YONAH, *The Carta Bible Atlas* (Jerusalem 2002) 63, map 76.

⁽⁶²⁾ See, e.g., J.M. HUTTON, "Mahanaim, Penuel, and Transhumance Routes: Observations on Genesis 32-33 and Judges 8", *JNES* 65 (2006) 161-178.

7,24) provides a location of Beth Barah near the outlet of the Jabbok. Rather, it indicates the furthestmost limit of Ephraim's capabilities for action in the Jordan Valley, potentially much further south.

IV. Bethabara, Beth Abarah, and Beth ha-Arabah in Historical Geography

If either model suggested above is correct, in which case בית הערבה, בית ברה, and Βηθαβαρᾱ all were derived somehow from the same toponymic antecedent, the locale may be identified more precisely at or very near the *Maḥāḍat Haḡla*. In Josh 15,6-7; 18,17-19, the Judahite-Benjaminite border proceeds from Beth Hoglah (בֵּית־חֻגְלָה; 15,6; 18,19)⁽⁶³⁾ northward to Beth ha-Arabah (בֵּית־הָעֲרָבָה; 15,6; 18,18 LXX^B; cf. MT הערבה), whence it continues by the otherwise unknown Rock of Bohan (בֹּחַן בֶּהָן; 15,6; 18,17)⁽⁶⁴⁾ towards Gilgal (גִּלְגָּל; 15,7; cf. 18,17 [גִּלְגָּל, Γαλιλαωθ]), which is "opposite the Ascent of Adummim" (נֹכַח לַמַּעֲלֵה אֲדֻמִּים; 15,7; 18,17), the southern flank of the *Wādi el-Qilt*, up which runs the more direct variation of the modern Jerusalem-Jericho road. Although Gilgal has traditionally been identified with *Ḥ. Muḡḡir* (193.143)⁽⁶⁵⁾ north of modern Jericho, the information provided by Josh 15,6-7; 18,17-19 may indicate a location to the southeast of Jericho where "several reliable...attestations" place a toponym *Galḡala* (196.139), which preserves the ancient name⁽⁶⁶⁾. This location

⁽⁶³⁾ Indeed, it is Beth Hoglah, identified in the area of modern *ʿĒn/Qaṣr/Dēr Haḡla*, ca. 4.5 km west of the *Maḥāḍat Haḡla*, that has leant that ford its present name. See, e.g., Y. ELITZUR, *Ancient Place Names in the Holy Land*. Preservation and History (Jerusalem – Winona Lake, IN 2004) 37-38; F.M. ABEL, *Géographie de la Palestine* (Paris 1967) II, 48, 274; J. SIMONS, *The Geographical and Topographical Texts of the Old Testament* (Leiden 1959) 138, §314.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ ABEL (*Géographie*, II, 48) identifies the "Rock of Bohan" with *Haḡar el-Aṣbaḥ*, a stone feature on the southern wall of the *Wādi Daber* (i.e., the lower course of the *W. Mukallik*), but this identification is predicated on the assumption that Gilgal may be identified with *Ḥān es-Sahl*, and in my opinion therefore seems too far south; I prefer to leave the feature unidentified, but in the *Gōr* somewhere around the *W. el-Qilt*.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Y. AHARONI, *The Land of the Bible*. A Historical Geography (trans. A. RAINEY) (Philadelphia, PA 1979) 435; D. BALY, *The Geography of the Bible*. A Study in Historical Geography (New York 1957) 202, following J. MUILENBURG, "The Site of Ancient Gilgal", *BASOR* 140 (1955) 11-27; cf. ABEL, *Géographie*, II, 336-337.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ E.g., A. ALT, "Das Institut im Jahre 1924", *Palästina Jahrbuch* 21 (1925) 5-58, here 27 and bibliography in 27 n. 1; ELITZUR, *Ancient Place Names*,

lies just west of the *H. ‘Ēn el-Ġarabe* (197.139), which would seem to preserve the name of biblical Beth ha-Arabah (see fig. 3) ⁽⁶⁷⁾.

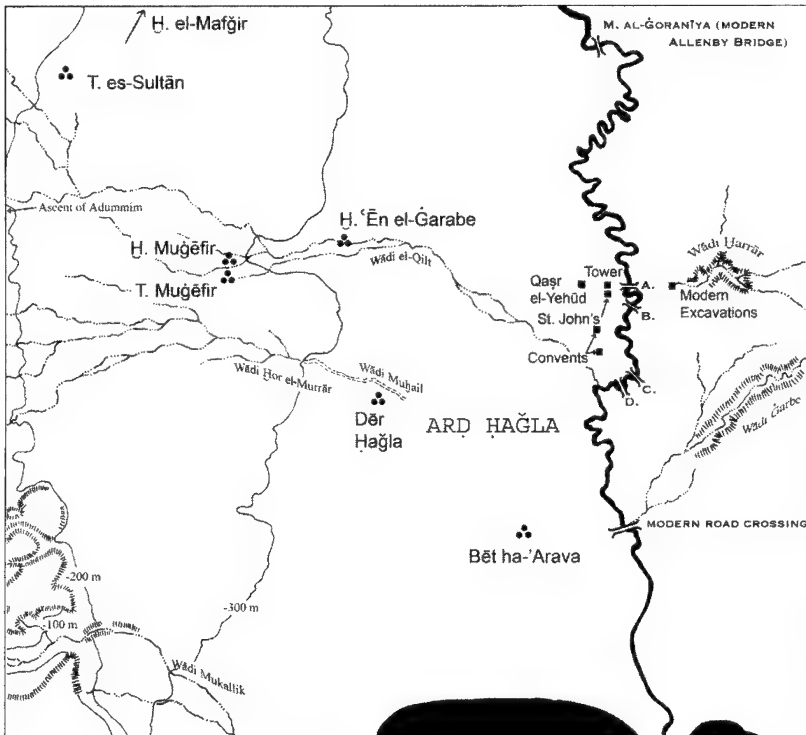


Fig. 3: The southern course of the Jordan River, showing significant archaeological features, as well as major wādī's and Jordan River fords, after map sheets 3053 I and 3153 IV in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Map Service) Jordan 1:50,000 series (K737), edition 1-AMS. The four lettered features of the el-Mağtas/Ḥaḡla ford system are: A) M. el-Mağtas; B) Modern Baptismal Site; C) Old Baptismal Site; D) M. Ḥaḡla. © J. Hutton.

146 and 146 n. 9; SIMONS (*Geographical and Topographical Texts*, 139-140, §314) and ABEL (*Géographie*, II, 48; cf. II, 336-337) place Gilgal at *Ḥān es-Sahl* (*Ḥān al-aḥmar*).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ E.g., ALT, “Institut”, 26-27; AHARONI, *Land of the Bible*, 431; H.O. THOMPSON, “Beth-Arabah,” *ABD* I, 681; ABEL, *Géographie*, II, 278; SIMONS, *Geographical and Topographical Texts*, 139, §314. Cf. map sheet 3153 IV in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Map Service) Jordan 1:50,000 series (K737), edition 1-AMS, which locates a set of ruins named “Beit ha ‘Arava” (marked as Bēt ha-‘Arava in fig. 3) just west of the southernmost Jordan ford (where the Jerusalem-Nā‘ūr Road now crosses the Jordan River).

This preservation of the ancient name would be somewhat unexpected, however, since both possible original names that we have been considering so far (Beth ha-Arabah and Beth Abarah) derive from Protosemitic (PS) roots beginning with *ʾayin* [cf. Heb. עבר “to pass over”⁽⁶⁸⁾ and Heb. ערב “dry, infertile,” especially the name of the Jordan Valley, עֶרְבָה⁽⁶⁹⁾], whereas the name here begins with *gayin* (*Ġarabe*). This datum may suggest that the modern Arabic name may be linked not to any purported precursor derived from the Hebrew reflex of a PS **√rb*, but rather related to PS **√grb*, realized in Hebrew as ערב “to grow dark”⁽⁷⁰⁾, and particularly familiar as the name of the Euphrates poplar (*Populus euphratica*), עֶרְבָה⁽⁷¹⁾ (e.g., Isa 44,4; Ps 137,2; Lev 23,40; and Job 40,22). Indeed, W. Borée identified *Ḥ. ʿĒn el-Ġarabe* as the site of Beth ha-Arabah, having found Euphrates poplars growing there⁽⁷²⁾.

If *Ḥ. ʿĒn el-Ġarabe* is in fact to be identified as an authentic preservation of the toponymic precursor of Beth ha-Arabah, Beth Barah, and Beth Abarah, then a whole series of linguistic and textual misanalyses falls into place, most probably along the lines of Model 2 (outlined above and made explicit here):

(1) The toponym was originally **bēt ḡarabi* (“House of Poplars/Willows”).

(2) Misanalysis in early Hebrew, later compounded by the phonological collapse of **/g/* and **/ʾ/* to */ʾ/* by the 1st century CE⁽⁷³⁾, yielded */bēt ʾarabā/*. The Hebrew- and Aramaic-speaking authors and tradents of most biblical texts presumably analyzed the new pronunciation as “House of the Plain”.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ BDB, s.v. עבר (716b-720b); HALOT, s.v. עבר I (778b-780b); compare, e.g., Arab. *√br* (E.W. LANE, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* [London 1865] I/5, 1936c-1937a); *ibrun* “bank, side” (1939a); *maʾbirun* “A place where a river is crossed; a ferry; a bank, or side, of a river, prepared for crossing” (1938c-1939a); etc.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ BDB, s.v. ערב IV (787a-b); and HALOT, s.v. ערב (878b); עֶרְבָה (878b); עֶרְבָה III (880a-b); compare Arab. *ʾirbun* “such as is dried up” (LANE, *Lexicon*, I/5, 1993a).

⁽⁷⁰⁾ BDB, s.v. ערב V (787b-788a); HALOT, s.v. ערב V (877b); and the related noun עֶרְבָה I (877b-878a); compare Arab. *√grb* (LANE, *Lexicon*, I/6, 2240b-2244c) meaning “to go away” and, by extension, the sun’s “going away” (to the west): *ḡarbīyūn* “of or relating to the west, or place of sunset; western” (2242c); or “growing dark”: *ḡurābun* “a certain black bird” (2243a; cf. Heb. עֶרֶב).

⁽⁷¹⁾ BDB, s.v. עֶרְבָה II (788a); HALOT, s.v. עֶרְבָה I (879b); compare Arab. *ḡarabun* “willow” (specifically *Salix babylonica*; LANE, *Lexicon*, I/6, 2242c).

⁽⁷²⁾ W. BORÉE, *Ortsnamen*, 78 n. 4; ALT, “Institut”, 27.

(3.a) Etiological misanalysis in the southern Levant, predicated on the proximity of a few major fords to the settlement bêt ‘arabā, occasioned the development of a new toponym bêt ‘abarā (בֵּית עֲבָרָה), which much later became Greek Βηθαβαρα. Moreover, the full toponym bêt ‘abarā (בֵּית עֲבָרָה) may have been clipped, such that the name was preserved as bêt barā (בֵּית בָּרָה) in a few instances (Judg 7,24).

(3.b) The translators of the Old Greek (and possibly also the tradents who worked in Greek, such as Origen and Eusebius) seem to have made the same misanalysis independently, representing *ġarabv (written as עֲרַבָּ, and therefore graphically indistinct from ‘arabā in Hebrew manuscripts) without the g characteristic of LXX’s representation of original Heb. */ġ/ (i.e., Βηθαβαβᾶ instead of an expected Βηθαγαβαᾶ or the like). Text-critically speaking, metathesis of the consonants β and ρ (e.g., LXXB at Josh 18,22) can only have been compounded by the existence of so many similar names.

(4) It is unclear whether the graphic corruption of a Hebrew text, an intentional play on words, or possibly somehow a corruption of an oral tradition (?) may have yielded the tradition of John’s being one who would “prepare” (κατασκευάζω) for Jesus at a “House of Preparation” (οἶκος κατασκευῆς < בֵּית עֲבָרָה < *בֵּית עֲבָרָה) preserved in Mk 1,2, and picked up by Origen in his *Commentary on John*.

Although appearing complicated, this schema seems to me to be the most economical way to read the textual variants that must also serve as our textual witnesses. But a nagging question remains: if the toponymic antecedent for these various geographical names lay on the western bank of the Jordan River, how is it that John 1,28 preserved a tradition of John’s ministry on the eastern bank? The answer, once again, lies in a critical study of the toponymic environment of the Levant.

Due to what Elitzur calls the “territorial nature of geographical names”⁽⁷⁴⁾ it is not uncommon for toponyms to be displaced ca. 7.0-8.5 km away from the historical location of the site⁽⁷⁵⁾. In short, even

⁽⁷³⁾ R.C. STEINER, “On the Dating of Hebrew Sound Changes (*H > H and *Ġ > ʿ) and Greek Translations (2 Esdras and Judith)”, *JBL* 124 (2005) 229-267.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ ELITZUR, *Ancient Place Names*, 128; see also *ibid.*, 13, 119, etc.; and *idem*, “The Concept of Territory in the Arab Village and in Biblical Geography”, *Israel Land and Nature* 7 (1982) 146-150.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ AHARONI, *Land of the Bible*, 123; A.F. RAINEY, “The Toponymics of Eretz-Israel”, *BASOR* 231 (1978) 10; J.M. MILLER, “Rehoboam’s Cities of Defense and the Levitical City List”, *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation*. Essays in Memory of D. Glenn Rose (eds. L.G. PERDUE – L.E. TOOMBS – G.L. JOHNSON) (Atlanta, GA 1987) 275; *idem*, “Site Identification: A Problem Area in Contemporary Biblical Scholarship”, *ZDPV* 99 (1983) 123-124.

assuming that no settlement named Beth Abarah ever actually existed, and that the name persisted only as a misanalyzed form of a nearby Beth ha-Arabah, the preservation of the name in this area, if proven, would serve as a check on allowing too free a reign to the placement of the Judahite-Benjaminite border. Furthermore, no matter the precise location of any of these locales, and regardless of whether *Ḥ. 'Ēn el-Ġarabe* authentically preserves the toponymic antecedent of Beth ha-Arabah and Bethabara, the very narrowly circumscribed geographical area between the land surrounding *Dēr Ḥaġla* and the area just east of the exit of the *Wādi el-Qilt* from the Judean hill country corresponds precisely to the Madaba Map's location of Bethabara, and to the testimony of the Bourdeaux Pilgrim. The identification of Byzantine Βηθαβαρα with Biblical בית הערבה and perhaps בית ברה, along with that locale's geographic placement in the Jordan Valley, leaves little doubt that the name indicates the area immediately to the west and west-north-west of the *el-Maġtas/Ḥaġla* fords. The "local tradition" of a "House of Crossing" (Βηθαβαρα), regardless of whether it authentically preserves the name of an ancient settlement or is only the product of an etiological misanalysis occasioned by fords conveniently located to the east of a settlement named Beth ha-Arabah, can only refer to this southern set of fords over the Jordan River. The Gospel of John's notice that the Baptist's ministry occurred "beyond the Jordan" simply indicates the eastern regional counterpart to this territory west of the ford. It should come as no surprise that Wiefel found the names *Wādi Ġarbe* (or *W. Ġarūbe*) and *Ḥirbet Ġarbe* on the eastern bank of the Jordan attached to a valley paralleling the *W. Ḥarrār* only 3.5 km to the south of that feature⁽⁷⁶⁾. Whether or not this name authentically preserves the toponym under discussion, its appearance on both sides of the Jordan River in regions roughly contiguous to one another attests to the "territorial nature of geographical names" argued for by Elitzur, and therefore to the possibility that the gospel writer was relying on reasonably accurate information in placing John's ministry "across the Jordan."

⁽⁷⁶⁾ WIEFEL, "Bethabara", 81; see previously F.M. ABEL, "Exploration de Sud-est de la vallée du Jourdain", *RB* 41 (1932) 78 fig. 1, and 88. One might point to the existence of a "wādi of Poplars" (נחל הערבים) in Isa 15,7 as further evidence that the ascent of Luhith (Isa 15,5; Jer 48,5) is to be located at this major ascent from the Jordan River to Livias; see HUTTON, "Mahanaim", 177 n. 68.

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* *

The foregoing discussion of the topographic notices concerning Bethabara/Bethany in the Gospel of John in the light of the gospel writer’s redactional choices, combined with the recognition that the toponym Bethabara referred to the set of fords itself, and not necessarily to a particular location of settlement, alleviates the problem adduced by Rudolf Bultmann⁽⁷⁷⁾ — which became the foundational problem underlying Riesner’s search for the locale⁽⁷⁸⁾ — namely, that the large number of the Baptist’s followers who joined Jesus at “the place where John had been baptizing formerly” (John 10,40-42) should have left some sort of trace in the archaeological record, an assumption complicated by the absence of contemporaneous remains at the *el-Mağtas* and *Hağla* fords⁽⁷⁹⁾. Through redactional means the writer of the fourth gospel accomplished a transferal of the location of John’s ministry to the region surrounding the southern Bethabara ford in order to bring his source — which originally located the Baptist’s ministry at Aenon — into conformity with the Synoptic Gospels. The lack of archaeological evidence for a pre-Byzantine settlement at the lowermost fords of the Jordan should be neither surprising nor especially problematic, at least on the basis of any standpoint reached from critical engagement with the composition history of the Gospel of John, and with historical geography.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ R. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (KEK; Göttingen 1941) 64-65 n. 5. The work of K. KUNDSIN (*Topologische Überlieferungstoffe im Johannes-Evangelium* [FRLANT 22; Göttingen 1925] 20-21) is also often cited in this context, but I see no real evidence in these pages that he had problematized this issue to the extent that BULTMANN did.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 10-12.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ For recent summaries of the excavation projects of the Jordanian side of the river, see R. MKHJIAN, “John the Baptist Church Area: New Evidence Regarding the Basilica and Four Piers”, *ADAJ* 48 (2004) 239-241; R. MKHJIAN — C. KANELLOPOULOS, “John the Baptist Church Area: Architectural Evidence”, *ADAJ* 47 (2003) 9-18; M. WAHEEB, “Mosaic Floors in the Baptism Site (Bethany Beyond the Jordan)”, *ADAJ* 49 (2005) 345-349; idem, “Recent Discoveries in Bethany Beyond the Jordan”, *ADAJ* 48 (2004) 243-248; idem, “Recent Discoveries in Bethany Beyond the Jordan in Jordan Valley”, *ADAJ* 47 (2003) 243-246, and the sources listed in those articles; see also the bibliography in RIESNER, *Bethanien*, 29 n. 66. It appears that the earliest structures found at the site are likely to be identified with the Byzantine pilgrimage site centered on the church built by Anastasius and described by Theodosius in the early 6th century (see n. 51 above).

Although this article builds upon much of the foregoing literature, its purpose is to provide a reassessment and critique of the latest argument that would move the baptismal location of the Gospel of John away from the traditionally recognized site of that event's remembrance. The argument presented here pertaining to the textual and traditional confusion of Βηθαβαρᾶ, בית הערבה, and בית ברה has been anticipated for decades (by, e.g., Lagrange, Clapp, and Wiefel), if not for centuries (e.g., Lightfoot). The article's original contribution, therefore, lies in the recognition of the potential lexical confusion that seems to be intimately intertwined in Origen's allusion (κατασκευῇ) to the verb κατασκευάζω of Mk 1,2 which, I have argued, proceeded from a tradition in which a toponymic tradition concerning a בית עברה was somehow corrupted into בית עברה, "House of Preparation".

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SUMMARY

Origen selected ἐν Βηθαβαρᾶ in John 1,28 as the superior reading in his *Comm. Jo.*, an assessment challenged by modern critics. Although the text-critical data seem to indicate ἐν Βηθανίᾳ as the preferable reading, this claim may be questioned on literary and redactional grounds. Those same observations provide evidence for intentional literary commemoration of John's ministry at the Jordan. Origen's gloss of Βηθαβαρᾶ as "House of Preparation" (οἶκος κατασκευῆς) leads to an examination of Mk 1,2-3, and its lexical divergence from LXX Mal 3,1.22-23 [=MT vv. 23-24]; Isa 40,3. Mark anomalously uses the verb κατασκευάζω, the nominal counterpart of which (κατασκευῇ) renders Heb. עֲבָדָה "work, preparation" (LXX^{AB} Exod 35,24), which is graphically similar to בית עברה. When combined with historical-geographical study of the area surrounding Jericho, these data allow us to trace the process of textual and traditional development whereby the toponym בית הערבה (Josh 15,6.61; 18,22), preserved at the modern *Ḥ. 'Ēn el-Ġarabe*, served as the toponymic antecedent of both Βηθαβαρᾶ and Beth Barah (Judg 7,24). This process of development provides additional defense for the traditional localization of John's ministry in the southern Jordan River Valley near the *el-Mağtas* and *Hağla* fords.

Zum Paradox vom “Verlieren” und “Finden” des Lebens

Das Paradox vom “Verlieren” und “Finden” des Lebens gilt als das “am häufigsten überlieferte Wort Jesu”⁽¹⁾. Mit gewissen Variationen kommt es in den Evangelien insgesamt sechs Mal vor: Mt 10,39; 16,25; Mk 8,35; Lk 9,24; 17,33, und Joh 12,25. Bei den Bemühungen um eine Rekonstruktion der Überlieferung zeigt sich ein *common sense* dahingehend, dass die Spezifizierung “um meinetwillen” (und erst recht die markinische Wendung “um des Evangeliums willen”) wohl sekundär eingefügt wurde⁽²⁾ und das Paradox somit wohl einen streng symmetrisch geformten⁽³⁾, weisheitlich geprägten⁽⁴⁾ Grundbestand hatte:

Satz (1) (a) Wer seine *psyche* erhalten will, (b) der wird sie verlieren.

Satz (2) (a) Wer aber seine *psyche* verliert, (b) der wird sie erhalten⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ W. REBELL, “‘Sein Leben verlieren’ (Mark 8,35 Parr.) als Strukturmoment vor- und nachösterlichen Glaubens”, *NTS* 35 (1989) 202-218, 203; vgl. auch W. GRUNDMANN, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (THKNT 2; Berlin 1980) 228: dieses Paradox sei der “Schlüssel zur Person Jesu. Das ist sein Weg.”

⁽²⁾ Vgl. nur REBELL, “Leben verlieren”, 209-210; J.D. CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus. The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (New York 1992) 353; F. NEIRYNCK, “Saving/Losing One’s Life. Luke 17,33 (Q?) and Mark 8,35”, *Von Jesus zum Christus*. Christologische Studien. Festgabe für Paul Hoffmann zum 65. Geburtstag (Hrsg. R. HOPPE – U. BUSSE) (BZNW 93; Berlin 1998) 295-318, 300-301, 309-310. Anders J. GNILKA, *Jesus von Nazaret. Botschaft und Geschichte* (Freiburg 2007) 173.

⁽³⁾ Vgl. nur G. DAUTZENBERG, *Sein Leben bewahren*. Psyche in den Herrenworten der Evangelien (StANT 14; München 1966) 53; R. BULTMANN, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen 1961) 79; CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 353.

⁽⁴⁾ Das Wort wird bei BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 79, 84, 97, 110, unter der Überschrift “1. Logien (Jesus als Weisheitslehrer)” und bei R. RIESNER, *Jesus als Lehrer*. Eine Untersuchung zum Ursprung der Evangelien-Überlieferung (WUNT 117; Tübingen 1988) 330 Anm. 166, unter der Überschrift “Worte messianischer Weisheit” rubriziert.

⁽⁵⁾ Vgl. dazu nur CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 353; BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 79; E. SCHWEIZER, “ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ D. Neues Testament”, *ThWB* IX, 635-657, 641; REBELL, “Leben verlieren”, 209-210; H.T. FLEDDERMANN, *Q. A Reconstruction and Commentary* (Leuven u.a. 2005) 763.

Trotz diverser zeitgeschichtlicher Parallelen⁽⁶⁾, ist an der Echtheit des jesuanischen Wortes nicht zu zweifeln⁽⁷⁾.

Nun kommt aber dieses derart gut bezeugte Logion in der Jesus-Literatur erstaunlich selten vor. In manchen Standardwerken ist es im Index nicht oder nur einmal aufgelistet⁽⁸⁾. Offensichtlich wird ihm in der Diskussion um den historischen Jesus und seine Verkündigung lediglich eine zweitrangige Bedeutung zugemessen. Der statistische Befund legt jedoch eine zentrale Bedeutung des Logions nahe⁽⁹⁾.

I. Im Schatten des Martyriums

An fünf der Belegstellen fällt vom rückwärtigen Kontext ein Schatten auf das Paradoxon, der es im Sinne des Verlusts des physischen Lebens einfärbt: Sowohl in Mt 10,38; 16,24 als auch in Mk 8,34 und Lk 9,23 ist die Rede vom "Kreuz auf sich nehmen", und dem korrespondiert in Joh 12,24 das Motiv vom sterbenden Weizenkorn. Insofern das Stichwort "Kreuz" allzu leicht an Martyriumsbereitschaft denken lässt⁽¹⁰⁾, wird auch das jeweils anschließende Paradoxon in diese Bedeutungsrichtung gedrängt⁽¹¹⁾. Unterstützung findet eine solche Sicht zum einen durch die Annahme, dass im Begriffspaar $\sigma\omega\zeta\omega$

⁽⁶⁾ Zu den philosophischen und rabbinischen Parallelen vgl. z.B. H.L. STRACK – P. BILLERBECK, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*. Erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch (München 1922) 587–588; GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 228; NOLLAND, *Luke* 9:21–18:34, 478; W.A. BEARDSLEE, "Saving One's Life by Losing it", *JAAR* 47 (1979) 61–64.

⁽⁷⁾ Vgl. nur BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 110; CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 353; REBELL, "Sein Leben verlieren", 203–208.

⁽⁸⁾ So verweisen z.B. die Register bei CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, für alle Verse auf ebd., 353; bei R. FUNK, *Honest to Jesus*. Jesus for a New Millenium (San Francisco, CA 1996) für Lk 17,33 auf ebd., 154, 214, sowie für Mt 16,24 auf ebd., 152; bei G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*. Ein Lehrbuch (Göttingen² 1997) lediglich für Mk 8,34–35 auf ebd., 337.

⁽⁹⁾ So auch REBELL, "Sein Leben verlieren", 203; GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 228; P. POKORNY, *Theologie der lukanischen Schriften* (FRLANT 174; Göttingen 1998) 149.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Zur Annahme, das Kreuz-Wort rufe zur Martyriumsbereitschaft, vgl. bzgl. Mk 8,34 nur P. DSCHULNIGG, *Das Markusevangelium* (ThKNT 2; Stuttgart 2007) 238, oder bzgl. Mt 10,38 etwa U. LUZ, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Mt 8–17)* (EKK I/2; Zürich u.a 1990) 144.

⁽¹¹⁾ Vgl. THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 337; GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 227; T. ZAHN, *Evangelium des Matthäus* (KNT 1; Leipzig ³1910) 416; J. GNILKA, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 173. Angedeutet wird diese Sicht auch von D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Sacra Pagina 1; Collegeville, PA 1991) 151, 251. Vgl. auch die bei REBELL, "Sein Leben verlieren", 210 Anm. 7, gesammelte Literatur.

und ἀπόλλυμι (Mt 16,25a; Mk 8,35a.b; Lk 9,24a.b) ein Anzeichen für "a situation in which the possession of life is under threat" zu erkennen sei⁽¹²⁾. Zum anderen kann man — wie G. Dautzenberg — die in Lk 17,33 gebotene alternative Begrifflichkeit περιποιέομαι und ζωογονέω zur Präzisierung der spezifischen Intention des verwendeten Wortes σῶζω heranziehen und dann im Sinne des "aram. ܢܬܐ (am Leben erhalten retten)" deuten⁽¹³⁾. Oder es wird auf das unausweichliche "Todesgeschick" des Menschen Bezug genommen⁽¹⁴⁾. Unter diesem Vorzeichen gelesen ergibt sich — neben der Interpretation in Richtung Martyriumsbereitschaft — leicht die zusätzliche Konsequenz, dass sich das in Satz (2) angesprochene "Erhalten" auf eine jenseitige Kompensation bezieht.

Gegen das Gewicht, das dem physischen Tod in der Interpretation des Paradoxons beigelegt wird, muss jedoch zunächst geltend gemacht werden: Die Aussagen zum Auf-sich-Nehmen des Kreuzes, zum Verlieren und Finden der ψυχή sowie zum Schaden für die Seele (Mt 16,24-26; Mk 8,34-37; Lk 9,23-25) dürften erst im Verlauf des Traditionsprozesses aus ursprünglich selbständigen Logien zusammengefügt worden sein⁽¹⁵⁾. Insofern ist die Verwendung des Paradoxons im jeweiligen Kontext kritisch zu prüfen. Und man wird gut daran tun, es erst einmal als Einzelwort zu verstehen. Jene Exegeten, die im Paradoxon samt Kontext einen Anklang von Leidens- und Todesbereitschaft wahrnehmen, vertreten überdies häufig einen Zusammenhang mit der prekären Situation der mk Adressaten — z.B. mit den Übergriffen in der Stadt Rom während der 60er Jahre (bzw. in unterschiedlichen Gegenden im Osten des Reiches) —⁽¹⁶⁾. Wenn dabei eine situative Einfärbung des Logions behauptet wird oder hervortritt, sagt das aber noch nichts über die ursprüngliche Intention desselben

⁽¹²⁾ Zitat nach NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 478; ebenso ebd., 483; vgl. J. R. DONAHUE – D. J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina 2; Collegeville, PA 2002) 263, 266.

⁽¹³⁾ DAUTZENBERG, *Sein Leben bewahren*, 52-53.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Vgl. GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 226.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Vgl. BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 86; NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 476, 486; DONAHUE – HARRINGTON, *Mark*, 266; GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 226, 228; U. LUZ, *Mt 8-17*, 144.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Zu den verschiedenen Positionen vgl. nur DONAHUE – HARRINGTON, *Mark*, 41-46, insbes. 45-46; oder B.J. INCIGNERI, *The Gospel to the Romans. The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel* (Leiden 2003).

aus. Von daher scheint es angebracht, dem Paradoxon erneut Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken⁽¹⁷⁾.

II. Akzentverschiebungen

Drei Mal erscheint das Logion im Verbund mit der ersten Leidensankündigung, dem Kreuz-Wort und der Sorge, die ψυχή könnte Schaden nehmen: Mt 16,24-26; Mk 8,34-37 und Lk 9,23-25. Allerdings sprechen diese drei Blöcke nicht *unisono*, sondern enthalten — im Blick auf unsere Fragestellung — nicht unwesentliche Variationen und Fingerzeige. Beginnen wir mit Lukas! In Lk 9,23 wird das dem Paradoxon vorausgehende Kreuz-Wort mit einem eingefügten καθ' ἡμέραν dahingehend gewichtet, dass es um eine täglich bzw. grundsätzlich einzunehmende Haltung geht⁽¹⁸⁾, und darunter wird kaum eine täglich zu bejahende Bereitschaft zum Martyrium zu verstehen sein. Dem korrespondiert auch Lukas' zweite Verwendung des Paradoxons: In Lk 17,33 wird das Logion im Kontext von Erwägungen zur Endzeit platziert, und wird da nicht im Sinne von Verfolgung und Martyrium⁽¹⁹⁾, sondern hinsichtlich einer Distanzierung von allen irdischen Größen begriffen, so dass der plötzlichen Ankunft des Menschensohns, die ja nach Lk 17,24 wie ein Blitz erfolgen soll, entsprochen werden kann.

Bei Matthäus findet sich εὐρίσκω statt σώζω. Dies ist in Mt 16,25 nur in Satz (2) der Fall, in Mt 10,39 jedoch in beiden Zeilen des Paradoxons: ὁ εὐρών τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπολέσει αὐτήν, καὶ ὁ ἀπολέσας τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ... εὐρήσει αὐτήν — ein Sachverhalt, der gerne mit Q in Verbindung gebracht wird —⁽²⁰⁾. Dabei wirkt ein

⁽¹⁷⁾ Dies haben bereits getan BEARDSLEE, "Saving one's Life", REBELL, "Sein Leben verlieren", N.F. SANTOS, "Jesus' Paradoxical Teaching in Mark 8:35; 9:35; and 10:43-44" *BS* 157 (2000) 15-25.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Vgl. nur H. KLEIN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (KEK I/3; Göttingen 102006) 341; E. SCHWEIZER, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (NTD 3, Göttingen 1982) 103; H.W. KUHN, "σταυρός", *EWNT* (1992) III, 642. Dem entspricht auch Lk 14,27, insofern dort eine Neubewertung sozialer Beziehungen gefordert wird.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ebenso SCHWEIZER, *Lukas*, 182, allerdings mit der Ansicht, Lk denke "nicht mehr" an Märtyrer.

⁽²⁰⁾ REBELL ("Sein Leben verlieren", 205), DAUTZENBERG (*Sein Leben bewahren*, 52) u.v.a. sehen Mt 10,39 (und Lk 17,33) auf Q, sowie Mt 16,25 (und Lk 9,24) auf Mk 8,35 zurückgreifen — wobei GRUNDMANN (*Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* [THKNT 1; Berlin 1986] 299), Mt 10,39 ebenso auf Q zurückführt (ebd., 400), in Mt 16,25 eine Angleichung der markinischen Form im Sinne "der Q-Fassung 10,39" sieht.

Verständnis von εὐρίσκω als "finden" — zumindest in Satz (1) — heikel, sofern es an Zufall denken lässt. Angemessener ist das Lexem an dieser Stelle als "für sich finden, sich verschaffen, erlangen" zu begreifen⁽²¹⁾, also im Sinne eines Zugewinns. So dürfte hier ein Finden zum Ausdruck gebracht werden, dem ein Suchen, ein Bemühen vorausgeht — also ein Finden als (Dazu-) Gewinnen, das deutlich von einem Sichern, Retten oder Erhalten der ψυχή zu unterscheiden ist. Satz (1) kann so nur schwerlich als ein Zurückschrecken oder Ausweichen vor Todesgefahr verstanden werden, sondern bezeichnet dann ein engagiertes Mühen um die ψυχή.

Mit diesen Indizien lichten sich die "Schatten des Todes", die sich angesichts der kontextuellen Verknüpfung über das Logion zu legen drohen. Zunächst muss freilich noch offen bleiben, ob diese Indizien möglicherweise auf eine spätere Akzentverschiebungen zurückgehen oder doch eher etwas Ursprüngliches bewahrt haben. Dass das Paradoxon in Q, nach weithin akzeptierter Ansicht, wohl mit εὐρίσκω formuliert war⁽²²⁾, spricht indes immerhin wahrscheinlich für Letzteres.

III. Semantisches Inventar

Von diesen ersten Beobachtungen ausgehend, drängt sich die Frage auf, ob denn die generelle Semantik des Paradoxons überhaupt den physischen Tod als den entscheidenden oder wesentlichen Bezugspunkt nahe legt.

Ψυχή ist ein schillerndes Lexem, das weder im hellenistischen noch im neutestamentlichen Kontext eine einheitlich Konzeption repräsentiert⁽²³⁾. Dementsprechend wird das Wort in Übersetzungen

⁽²¹⁾ So W. BAUER und K. u. B. ALAND (*Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* [Berlin u.a. 1988] 659), die Mt 10,39 und 16,25 als Belegstellen nennen; ebenso H. PREISKER ("εὐρίσκω" *TWNT* II, 767-768, 767). LUZ (*Mt* 8-17, 145), argumentiert entgegengesetzt: εὐρίσκω mache deutlich, "daß es um etwas geht, was man sich nicht verschaffen, sondern nur erlangen kann", was "an den Tod und das ewige Leben" denken lasse.

⁽²²⁾ Vgl. nur FLEDDERMANN, Q, 763-764. Dagegen favorisiert NOLLAND (*Luke* 9:21-18:34, 478), die markinische Fassung als die ältere wegen "(t)he sense of a critical situation".

⁽²³⁾ Vgl. nur D.E. AUNE, "Human Nature and Ethics in Hellenistic Philosophical Traditions and Paul. Some Issues and Problems", *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (Hrsg. T. ENGBERG – PEDERSEN) (Minneapolis, MN 1995) 291-312, der (ebd., 292-297) die Veränderung des mit ψυχή Bezeichneten bei Plato und Aristoteles selbst skizziert.

meist mit “Leben” oder “Seele”⁽²⁴⁾ und in der Sekundärliteratur gelegentlich mit “Existenz” oder “Self”⁽²⁵⁾ wiedergegeben. Will man weder moderne Erwägungen eintragen noch hellenistischen Seelenkonzeptionen zu viel Raum geben, so wird man wohl zuerst nach der Verwendung des Lexems in der synoptischen Tradition zu fragen haben⁽²⁶⁾. Da zeigt sich, dass die ψυχή als gefährdete bzw. bedrohte Größe gekennzeichnet wird. Davon weichen nur die Belege in alttestamentlichen Zitaten (Mt 12,18; Mt 22,37 parr. Mk 12,30; Lk 10,27) und im Lobgesang Marias (Lk 1,46) ab. Ansonsten ist durchweg die Gefährdung deutlich: von den Kindheitsgeschichten angefangen bis zum Ringen Jesu im Garten Gethsemane.

Allerdings werden immer dann, wenn bei der Gefährdung der ψυχή der leibliche Tod eine Rolle spielt, entsprechende Lexeme ins semantische Geflecht eingeführt, die diesen Akzent unmissverständlich hervortreten lassen. Bei der Aufforderung des Engels an Josef zur Rückkehr aus Ägypten, Mt 2,20, ist es der rückwärtige Zusammenhang mit dem Kindermord, der den Hinweis verständlich macht, dass diejenigen tot sind, die nach der ψυχή des Kindes getrachtet (ζητέω) haben. In Mt 10,28 zeigen ἀποκτείνω τὸ σῶμα und γέννα an, worum es geht, und in Mt 20,28 parr. Mk 10,45 ist es der *terminus technicus* für die Lebenshingabe δίδωμι τὴν ψυχὴν⁽²⁷⁾; im Gethsemane-Gebet Jesu, in Mt 26,38 parr. Mk 14,34, wird die Furcht vor dem Tod, θάνατος, explizit ausgesprochen. Bei Lukas kommt in 2,35 Simeons Prophezeiung vom Schwert, das Marias ψυχή durchdringt, hinzu, und in 12,20 wird der leibliche Tod des reichen Kornbauern sowohl durch die Wendung ἀπαιτέω τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπὸ σοῦ als auch durch die Frage, wem dann das von ihm Angehäufte gehören soll, unmissverständlich angezeigt.

Das Bild wird noch klarer, wenn man untersucht, in welchen semantischen Verbindungen das Lexem ψυχή bei Aussagen über ein — vermeintlich oder tatsächlich — positives Bemühen vorkommt, das

(24) Die Lutherübersetzung (1984) gibt ψυχή etwa Mt 2,20; 6,25; 10,39; 16,25; 20,28 mit “Leben” und Mt 10,28; 11,29; 12,18; 16,26; 22,37; 26,28 mit “Seele” wieder.

(25) Zu “Existenz“ siehe nur DAUTZENBERG (*Sein Leben bewahren*), und zu “Self” etwa J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20* (WBC 35A; Dallas, TX 1989) 68, 686.

(26) Das Lexem wird verwendet in Mt 2,20; 6,25[2]; 10,28[2].39[2]; 11,29; 12,18; 16,25[2].26[2]; 20,28; 22,37; 26,38; Mk 3,4; 8,35[2].36.37; 10,45; 12,30; 14,34; Lk 1,46; 2,35; 6,9; 9,24[2]; 10,27; 12,19[2].20.22.23; 14,26; 17,33; 21,19.

(27) Vgl. W. HAUBECK, “λύτρον”, *TBLNT* (Wuppertal 1997) I, 361-364; V. HAMPEL, *Menschensohn und historischer Jesus* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990) 322, 326-331.

einer Gefährdung zu wehren sucht. Als “primärer” Bezugspunkt eines solchen Mühens erscheint *ψυχή* in Verbindung mit *θέλω σώσαι* (Mt 16,25a; Mk 8,35a; Lk 9,24a), allein mit *σώζω* (Mk 8,35b; Lk 9,24b — Mk 3,4; Lk 6,9)⁽²⁸⁾, mit *εὕρισκω* (Mt 10,39a — Mt 10,39b; Mt 16,25b)⁽²⁹⁾, mit *ζητέω περιποιεῖν* (Lk 17,33a), mit *ζωογονεῖν* (Lk 17,33b), und schließlich mit *κτάομαι* (Lk 21,19). Auch die Wendungen *μὴ μεριμνᾶτε τῇ ψυχῇ ὑμῶν* (Mt 6,25; Lk 12,22) und *εὐρήσετε ἀνάπausιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν* (Mt 11,29) sollen hier nicht unerwähnt bleiben. Diese Belege verweisen auf eine Gedankenfigur, die semantisch auf unterschiedliche Weise realisiert wurde.

Zunächst noch ein Blick auf Verwendungen, die außerhalb des Paradoxons begegnen! Lukas bietet in 21,12-19 Überlegungen zur Bewältigung von Verfolgung. Darin gebraucht er Elemente, die wir bereits im Kontext des Paradoxons beobachtet haben⁽³⁰⁾, und er schließt mit der Aussage *ἐν τῇ ὑπομονῇ ὑμῶν κτήσασθε τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν*. Bemerkenswerterweise artikuliert dieser Satz, trotz der zuvor angedeuteten Tötung “mancher” der Angesprochenen (V. 16b), nicht ein Überdauern bzw. positives Überwinden des Todes, sondern die Bewahrung des Lebens im Angesicht der Todesgefahr⁽³¹⁾.

Auch die Verbindung von *σώζω* mit *ψυχή* begegnet außerhalb des Paradoxons. Dies ist in der Perikope von der Heilung der “verdorrtten Hand” in einer Synagoge der Fall (Mk 3,1-6 parr.). Dort wird in Mk 3,4 par. Lk 6,9 gefragt: “Ist es erlaubt am Sabbat Leben (*ψυχή*) zu erhalten (*σώζω*) oder zu verderben?”. Bei Matthäus findet sich stattdessen die Frage nach der Berechtigung, ein Schaf am Sabbat aus der Grube zu holen (Mt 12,11). An allen drei Stellen steht die Absicht im Vordergrund, individuellem Leben Gutes angedeihen zu lassen⁽³²⁾ — was in Mt 12,12 auch ausdrücklich angefügt wird (“Darum darf man am Sabbat Gutes tun [*καλῶς ποιέω*]“) — und nicht die Intention, eine Todesgefahr abzuwenden. “Nicht nur Lebensrettung, sondern auch Lebensförderung”⁽³³⁾ ist hier avisiert. Das ist umso mehr zu beachten

⁽²⁸⁾ *Σώζω αὐτήν* (Mk 8,35b; Lk 9,24b) und *ψυχὴν σώσαι* (Mk 3,4; Lk 6,9).

⁽²⁹⁾ *Εὕρισκω τὴν ψυχὴν* (Mt 10,39a) und *εὕρισκω αὐτήν* (Mt 10,39b; Mt 16,25b).

⁽³⁰⁾ Lk 21,12.17 “um meines Namens willen”; V. 14 “nicht vorher sorgen” (wenn auch nicht mit *μεριμνάω* formuliert sondern mit *προμελετάω*); V. 16 Zerwürfnis mit Familie und Freunden.

⁽³¹⁾ Vgl. J. NOLLAND, *Luke 18:35-24:35* (WBC 35C; Dallas, TX 1993) 998.

⁽³²⁾ Vgl. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20*, 261: *ψυχή* habe hier “overtones of the worth and dignity of human life.”

⁽³³⁾ THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 325.

als Lukas hier drei der im Paradoxon verwendeten Lexeme, neben *ψυχή* und *σώζω* auch noch *ἀπόλλυμι*, aufweist. Zwar bietet Mk 3,4 *ἀποκτείνω*, das Verb wird aber hier im übertragenen Sinn zu verstehen sein⁽³⁴⁾. (Eine Diskussion darüber, ob das lukanische *ἀπόλλυμι* oder das markinische *ἀποκτείνω* ursprünglicher sein mag⁽³⁵⁾, ändert deshalb im Blick auf die intendierte Aussage nichts.) Ist an dieser Stelle, Mk 3,1-6 parr., kein Todesbezug zu finden, so sind mögliche Rückschlüsse auf die Bedeutung des Paradoxons zu erwägen.

Fasst man das Lexem *σώζω* isoliert ins Auge, und konsultiert nun dazu Bauer/Aland, so findet man dort als Gesamtbedeutung “unversehrt erhalten, bewahren, erretten” angegeben, und zwar zunächst: “1. vor natürl(ichen) Gefahren und Nöten bewahren”, in den Bedeutungsnuancen: “a. vor dem Tode bewahren”, “c. von Krankheit ... befreien”, oder “b. heil herausführen aus einer Lage” bzw. “d. bewahren, in gutem Zustand erhalten”⁽³⁶⁾. Dabei findet sich das Paradoxon unter die Bedeutung “vor dem Tode bewahren” eingeordnet. Lassen schon die Beobachtungen zur Verwendung von *ψυχή* sowie zu Mk 3,4 par. Lk 6,9 diese Kategorisierung als zweifelhaft erscheinen, so kommt noch hinzu: Der Todesbezug des Lexems wird — zumindest im Neuen Testament — ausnahmslos durch den Kontext markiert, wie etwa beim Hilferuf des sinkenden Petrus oder beim Gespött der Gaffer unter dem Kreuz Jesu⁽³⁷⁾. Der jetzige Kontext des Paradoxons aber ist, wie bereits deutlich gemacht werden konnte, nicht der ursprüngliche.

Im Vordergrund beim *ψυχή*-Gebrauch unseres Logions steht demnach — negativ formuliert — eine Gefährdung, Bedrohung oder Infragestellung der *ψυχή* während der irdischen Existenz, bzw. — positiv gewendet — (die Abwendung der Bedrohung insofern) die Ermöglichung einer “geheilten” oder “beruhigten” *ψυχή*.

Als fragliche Größe der irdischen Existenz wird die *ψυχή* etwa in

⁽³⁴⁾ Vertreten wird auch: Dies sei (1) eine Anspielung auf Tötungsabsichten (so E. LOHMEYER, *Das Evangelium des Markus* [KEK I/2; Göttingen ¹⁵1959] 69; GRUNDMANN, *Markus*, 96); (2) ein Schluss “vom Recht auf Selbstverteidigung am Sabbat ... auf das Recht der Heilung am Sabbat” (so THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 329).

⁽³⁵⁾ DAUTZENBERG, *Sein Leben bewahren*, 158, fasst die lukanische Fassung als “Übersetzungsvariante” zum markinischen *ἀποκτείνω* auf.

⁽³⁶⁾ BAUER – ALAND, *Wörterbuch*, 1591-1593.

⁽³⁷⁾ *Σώζω* im Sinne der Abwendung einer Todesgefahr im Hilferuf des sinkenden Petrus: Mt 14,30; im Gespött der Gaffer: Mt 27,40.42.49; Mk 15,30-31; Lk 23,35.37.39.

der Unterweisung über das Sorgen⁽³⁸⁾ thematisiert. Das Lehrstück wird in Mt 6,25 und Lk 12,22 fast wörtlich identisch eröffnet: "μὴ μεριμνᾶτε τῇ ψυχῇ (Mt: ὑμῶν) τί φάγητε ... μηδὲ τῷ σώματι (Mt: ὑμῶν) τί ἐνδύσῃσθε." Dabei bezeichnet der traditionell mit "sorget nicht" übersetzte Ausdruck μὴ μεριμνᾶτε wohl weniger ein passives, ängstliches Besorgtsein als vielmehr ein aktives Mühen im Sinne von "Sorge tragen für" bzw. "sich abmühen für"⁽³⁹⁾. Dafür sprechen nicht nur "der Wechsel von μεριμνᾶν mit ζητεῖν und ἐπιζητεῖν" sowie die beiden folgenden Bildworte, "die nicht von Sorge, sondern von Mühe reden"⁽⁴⁰⁾; überdies gilt auch, dass die Sorge wohl meist ein Mühen in Gang setzt. Zeigt dieses Mühen um die ψυχὴ schon eine Affinität mit Satz (1a), so ergibt die implizite, mitzudenkende Umkehrung, dass der Mensch durch seine Sorge das Leben verfehlen könnte, eine Entsprechung mit dem gesamten Satz (1). Eine Reihe von weiteren Imperativen — ἐμβλέψατε (Mt 6,26), καταμάθετε (Mt 6,28), μεριμνήσητε (Mt 6,31), ζητεῖτε (Mt 6,33) — strukturiert und treibt den Gedanken voran bis zum Schlussvers⁽⁴¹⁾. Das ζητεῖν — das laut lukanischer Fassung des Paradoxons (Lk 17,33) um die ψυχὴ kreisen und dabei verlieren kann — sollte sich an erster Stelle auf das "Reich Gottes" richten: "(Lk: πλὴν) ζητεῖτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν (Mt: τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ / Lk: αὐτοῦ)", und wird dann nur gewinnen: "καὶ ταῦτα (Mt: πάντα) προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν" (Mt 6,33; Lk 12,31), nämlich die zuvor als Gegenstände des μεριμνᾶν bezeichneten elementaren Dinge des Lebens. So ist das erste Jesuswort bereits auf die Ergänzung durch das abschließende angelegt⁽⁴²⁾. Damit ergibt sich ein kohärenter Gedanke: "Wer die Gottesherrschaft sucht, ist die Lebenssorge los, weil Gott uneingeschränkt für das Leben sorgt"⁽⁴³⁾. Hier zeichnet sich das Paradoxon ab, insofern der Anfang Satz (1) widerspiegelt und der Schluss Satz (2).

⁽³⁸⁾ Die Zusammenstellung dieser Unterweisung wird wohl einhellig Q zugeordnet, so z.B. von KLEIN, *Lukas*, 450-451; D. ZELLER, "μέριμνα", *EWNT* (1995) II, 1005; FLEDDERMANN, *Q*, 594-616.

⁽³⁹⁾ Die erste Option vertritt z.B. R. BULTMANN, "μεριμνάω" *TWNT* IV, 596-597, die zweite J. JEREMIAS, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (Göttingen 1956) 179; ebenso z.B.: GRUNDMANN, *Matthäus*, 215; ZELLER, "μέριμνα", 1005.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ JEREMIAS, *Gleichnisse*, 179.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Vgl. dazu J. BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret* (Berlin u.a. 1996) 163; LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 473.

⁽⁴²⁾ Vgl. BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 166.

⁽⁴³⁾ BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 166; ebenso KLEIN, *Lukas*, 456, zu Lk 12,3. Zum Zusammenhang zwischen der Rede von der βασιλεία und der Weisheit vgl. nur CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 287-291.

Ein Blick auf den so genannten "Heilandsruf" (Mt 11,28-30) verstärkt diese Spur. Er wird zwar vorwiegend in seiner weisheitlichen Prägung besprochen⁽⁴⁴⁾, und darum meist skeptisch beurteilt bzw. später eingeordnet. Doch insofern Jesus durchaus weisheitliche Momente in seiner Verkündigung aufgenommen hat, ist auch mit der Möglichkeit zu rechnen, dass er diese Worte "vorgeprägt" hat⁽⁴⁵⁾. Dafür spricht auch, dass sich nach Theissen die kontrafaktische Beanspruchung auch der Weisheit durch die Jesusbewegung "aus dem Zentrum, aus der Verkündigung der Königsherrschaft Gottes" ergibt⁽⁴⁶⁾. Jedenfalls weist der Heilandsruf offensichtliche semantische und thematische Berührungen mit dem Paradoxon auf. Zunächst ist wieder einem eher passiven Verständnis zu wehren, diesmal hinsichtlich der "Mühseligen". "Κοπιάω heißt 'sich (in körperlicher oder geistiger Arbeit) mühen'"⁽⁴⁷⁾; darauf weisen auch die Imperative dieser Verse hin (δεῦτε [V. 28], ἄρατε und μάθετε [V. 29]). Worum sich die κοπιῶντες mühen und was sie zu "finden" hoffen, ergibt sich aus dem, was ihnen hier zugesagt wird: "erquickt" werden (ἀναπαύω [V.28a]) und "Ruhe für die Seele" (ἀνάπαυσις ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν [V. 29b])⁽⁴⁸⁾. Impliziert ist dabei: Das Erstrebte für die ψυχή ist anderswo nicht zu finden, und das bisher getragene Joch — dem das hier angesprochene "sanfte Joch" (V. 30) gegenübersteht — lässt das für die Seele Erhoffte trotz allen Mühens nicht erreichen. Der Mensch verliert darum gerade, was er erstrebt. Satz (1) des Paradoxons bildet hier fraglos eine Parallele, und Satz (2) findet eine Entsprechung im Abwenden vom Bisherigen sowie der Aufnahme des "sanften Joches" Christi seitens derer, denen Ruhe für die ψυχή in Aussicht gestellt wird. Das erinnert an das ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ des Paradoxons⁽⁴⁹⁾, was später noch zu bedenken sein wird.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Vgl. nur LUZ, *Mt 8-17*, 199-200, 216-222; G. THEISSEN, "Jesusbewegung als charismatische Wertrevolution", *NTS* 35 (1989) 343-360, 353-355.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Vgl. dazu RIESNER, *Jesus als Lehrer*, 339-343. Auch in feministischen Sophia-Studien wird diese Möglichkeit notiert, etwa bei E. SCHÜSSLER-FIORENZA, *In Memory of Her* (New York 1983) 134.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ THEISSEN, "Jesusbewegung", 355.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ LUZ, *Mt 8-17*, 219.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Eine sozialgeschichtliche Bestimmung der κοπιῶντες versucht G. THEISSEN, "Wer sind die Mühseligen und Beladenen in Mt 11,28-30? Befreiungstheologische Motive im Heilandsruf Jesu", *Dem Tod nicht glauben. Sozialgeschichte der Bibel* (F.S. L. SCHOTTRUFF) (Hrsg. F. CRÜSEMANN u.a.) (Gütersloh 2004) 49-66.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Zu beachten ist die vorausgehende *theologische* Grundlegung in Mt 11,25-27.

Gewissermaßen eine Illustration dafür, dass die κοπιῶντες auf dem ursprünglich begangenen Weg eben nicht das für die ψυχή Gesuchte finden können, ist die Erzählung vom "reichen Kornbauern" in Lk 12,16-21. Er versucht, auf dem üblichen Weg, Wohlstand zu erlangen. Er hat Erfolg auf diesem Weg, wird reich und hört auf, einer der κοπιῶντες zu sein. So spricht er sich selbst zu, was im Heilandsruf von Jesus in Aussicht gestellt wird: καὶ ἐρῶ τῇς ψυχῆς μου, und er ermuntert sie: ψυχὴ, ἔχεις πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ ... ἀναπαύου, φάγε, πίε, εὐφραίνου (V. 19). Doch der Fortgang der Dinge erweist seinen Weg der Selbstsicherung als Irrtum. Nicht — wie von ihm erhofft — auf Grund von Gütern lässt sich eine ἀνάπαυσις für die ψυχή finden, sondern — wie der Heilandsruf deutlich macht — durch die Aufnahme des Jochs Christi.

So lässt sich also zunächst festhalten: Beleuchtet man das Paradoxon in jenem Beziehungsgefüge, das sich aufgrund von wichtigen Lexemen des Logions ergibt, so wird plausibel, dass es eine Erfahrung in eine prägnante Formel fasst: Das Umschlagen des bewusst eingegangenen Verlusts, der Abkehr von gängigen Wegen, in einen unerwarteten Gewinn — vom willentlichen Loslassen zum Erhalten. Diese Sicht ist nun nicht als allgemeine Lebensweisheit aufzufassen⁽⁵⁰⁾. Sie wird immer im theologischen Horizont formuliert, und in Mt 6,33 par. Lk 12,31 ausdrücklich als Ausrichtung auf das Reich Gottes charakterisiert. Der leibliche Tod hat hier nirgends eine primäre Bedeutung.

IV. Der "Sitz" im Leben Jesu

Eine solche Maxime lässt sich zudem als Aussage des irdischen Jesus über seine eigene Lebensauffassung verstehen. Unschwer kann ja aufgezeigt werden, dass sich in unserem Paradoxon ein Großteil dessen widerspiegelt, was von Jesu Leben, Verhalten und Predigt bekannt ist.

Wohl kaum zu bestreiten ist die Bedeutung, welche der Aussage von Satz (2a) — ὁ δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ — im Leben Jesu zukommt. Der bewusst eingegangene Verlust bzw. das willentliche Loslassen dessen, was in einer gewöhnlichen Lebensordnung als erstrebenswert erscheint, ist bei ihm ständig präsent. Er lebt mit den völlig Verarmten, den πτωχοί⁽⁵¹⁾; Seine Reputation als Lehrer setzt er

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Diesen Unterschied betont schon BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 110.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Zur dramatischen Situation, die durch das Wort πτωχός angezeigt wird, und zur Unterscheidung von πένης, vgl. nur CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 271-273.

bewusst aufs Spiel, nicht zuletzt durch den Umgang mit den *outcasts* und mit der offenen Tischgemeinschaft mit jedermann. Das bringt ihm folgerichtig einen üblen Leumund ein: Er wird nicht nur als "Fresser und Weinsäufer" (Mt 11,19; Lk 7,34) beschimpft⁽⁵²⁾, sondern es wird überdies der Vorwurf erhoben, er "verführe das Volk" (Joh 7,12). Dass Jesus Frauen unter seinen Nachfolgern hat, gießt noch weiteres Wasser auf die Mühlen der Verdächtigungen⁽⁵³⁾. Den Rückhalt seiner Familie, so lässt sich in Mk 3,20-21.31 erkennen, verliert er — zumindest anfangs — auf Grund seiner Lebensweise⁽⁵⁴⁾, die ihm seitens der Angehörigen den Verdacht einhandelt, "er sei von Sinnen" (Mk 3,21). Er verzichtet auf eine eigene Familie⁽⁵⁵⁾, auf einen festen Wohnsitz⁽⁵⁶⁾ und auf den Versuch, sich finanziell zu sichern — und er fasst diesen Entschluss in bildhafte Worte, etwa: "Die Füchse haben Gruben und die Vögel unter dem Himmel haben Nester, aber der Menschensohn hat nichts, da er sein Haupt hinlege" (Mt 8,20 par.), und: "Ihr sollt euch nicht Schätze sammeln auf Erden, wo sie die Motten und der Rost fressen" (Mt 6,19).

Derartige Indizien ließen sich weiter vermehren. Doch deutlich ist, dass Jesus bewusst aufgibt, was im gewöhnlichen Leben als erstrebenswert erscheint, und dass er auch immer wieder die üblichen, scheinbar lebenssichernden Überlegungen zu Essen, Kleidung, Besitz und Geld sowohl durch sein Reden und Handeln in Frage stellt.

Und was er für sich selbst zu tun beschlossen hat, das verlangt er auch von seinen Jüngern. Mit dem Verweis auf die Vögel und ihre Nester stellt er Nachfolgewilligen vor Augen, worauf sie sich einlassen würden. Bei anderer Gelegenheit ermahnt er mit den Worten "Wer seine Hand an den Pflug legt und sieht zurück, der ist nicht geschickt für das Reich Gottes" (Lk 9,62), oder er provoziert mit dem Satz "Geh hin, verkaufe, was du hast, und gib's den Armen, so wirst du einen Schatz im Himmel haben; und komm und folge mir nach" (Mt 19,21

⁽⁵²⁾ Vgl. nur CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 261-264, zu Jesu "open commensality".

⁽⁵³⁾ Vgl. dazu U.E. EISEN, "Jesus und die Frauen", *BZ* 45 (2001) 79-93.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Vgl. THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 182-184; E.P. SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London 1993) 125-126; CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 299-302: Jesu "radical social egalitarianism" vs. "the patriarchal family".

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Zur Ehelosigkeit Jesu und die damit verbundene Problematik vgl. GNILKA, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 178-179.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Vgl. Crossan (*The Historical Jesus*, 345-348), der die Wanderexistenz ("itineracy") geradezu als notwendige Voraussetzung betrachtet; SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 107-111.

par); ferner fordert er zur Neugewichtung der sozialen Beziehungen heraus: "Wer Vater und Mutter mehr liebt als mich, der ist meiner nicht wert" (Mt 10,37 par).

Kein Wunder also, dass die Jünger eines Tages eine Art Standortbestimmung vornehmen und dass Petrus Jesus anspricht: "Siehe, wir haben alles verlassen, und sind dir nachgefolgt" (Mk 10,28b). Sie haben Satz (2a) — wie Jesus — realisiert und wollen wissen, wohin das führt bzw. wie es um Satz (2b) steht. Matthäus lässt Petrus folgerichtig fortfahren: "Was wird uns dafür gegeben?" (Mt 19,27c) Und Jesus antwortet ganz im Sinne des Paradoxons: "Wer Haus, Brüder, Schwestern, Vater, Mutter, (Kinder), Äcker verlässt" (so die Aufzählung bei Mk und Mt), "der wird dafür 'hundertfach empfangen'" (Mt 19,29; Mk 10,30) bzw. "vielfach empfangen" (Lk 18,30), und zwar "in dieser Zeit" (Mk 10,30; Lk 18,30) sowie in "der zukünftigen Welt das ewige Leben" (Mk 10,30; Lk 18,30). "Here the material reward comes *prior* to eternal life" ⁽⁵⁷⁾. Die Differenzen, die hier zwischen den Synoptikern bestehen ⁽⁵⁸⁾, sind in der Sache, die wir zu bedenken haben, zu vernachlässigen. Allenfalls die Tatsachen, dass sich bei Mt die Präzisierung "in dieser Zeit" nicht findet und er — wie Lk — auf eine detaillierte Aufzählung der Vergütungen verzichtet, könnten als Verlagerung des Zugesagten ins Jenseits verstanden werden ⁽⁵⁹⁾. Doch entspricht auch die kürzere mt Fassung "der wird's hundertfach empfangen und das ewige Leben ererben" der zweigliedrigen Antwort bei Mk und Lk, die offensichtlich eine Aufzählung im Sinne eines *Nacheinanders* von "schon hier" und "dereinst" formuliert.

In der Einschätzung der Historizität des hier im Jesus-Stoff begegnende Ausblicks gibt es große Unterschiede ⁽⁶⁰⁾; mehrheitlich jedoch wird eine Kompensation, die sich bereits in diesem Leben zu

⁽⁵⁷⁾ SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 173; m.E. resultiert daraus aber nicht — wie SANDERS (ebd., 173, 189-190 annimmt —, dass "society will be reorganized so that Jesus' followers ... will have substantial possession", sondern, dass sich der diesseitige Ausgleich innerhalb der Jesusbewegung vollzieht.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Lk hat "vielfach" statt "hundertfach", Mt und Lk verzichten auf eine Präzisierung dessen, was in dieser Welt zu erwarten ist, die ἐνεκεν-Präzisierung variiert bei allen drei (Mt: "um meines Namens willen", Mk: "um meinetwillen und um des Evangeliums willen", Lk "um des Reiches Gottes willen") und die Aufzählung des zu Verlassenden variiert leicht.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ So jedenfalls LOHMEYER, *Matthäus*, 289-290.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ BULTMANN, *Synoptische Tradition*, 115, nimmt an, es sei nur eine jenseitige Kompensation im Blick. Dagegen optiert "The third Quest" — vgl. nur FUNK, *Honest to Jesus*, 215 — eine Erfüllung "here and now".

vollziehen beginnt, nicht in Frage gestellt. Plausibel dürfte die Annahme einer ursprünglich kürzeren Fassung sein, wie sie bei Mt und Lk vorliegt. Mk dürfte die Zusage für dieses Leben ausgebaut haben. Auch die auf Jesu Person bezogenen Spezifizierungen (“um meines Namens willen” [Mt 19,29; Mk 10,29], “um des Evangeliums willen” [Mk 10,29], “um des Reiches Gottes Willen” [Lk 18,29]) dürften — wie auch beim Paradoxon — zunächst als sekundär auszuklammern sein. Es bleibt der Grundgedanke, dass jeder, der Familie und Besitz verlässt, vielfach empfangen wird, schon jetzt und dann einmal das “ewige Leben”.

Die Struktur des Gedankens entspricht in Bezug auf Verlust und Gewinn Satz (2), wenn auch das semantische Inventar nicht identisch ist. Die Art des “Gewinnes” wird ausdifferenziert; doch bleibt — außer bei Mk — die konkrete Beschreibung ähnlich unspezifisch⁽⁶¹⁾ wie bei unserem Paradoxon. So spiegelt sich in beiden Logien, sowohl in Satz (2b) als auch im “vielfach empfangen”, eine Erfahrung, die in der synoptischen Tradition verschiedentlich durchschimmert: Durch Verlust und Verzicht fällt dem Menschen ein Gewinn zu.

Wenige Hinweise dazu mögen genügen. Bei der in Mk 3 berichteten Konfrontation mit seiner Sippe verweist Jesus auf eine andere Familie: “Diejenigen die den Willen tun meines Vaters im Himmel” (Mk 3,34-35). Seine Reputation mag beschädigt worden sein, aber nicht generell, sondern nur in gewissen Kreisen; durchaus konnte er sozial gut gestellte Personen ansprechen, wie aus winzigen “Marginalien”, etwa dem Hinweis auf Johanna, der Frau eines herodianischen Verwalters, deutlich wird⁽⁶²⁾. Aus dem Umfeld derer, die ihm nachfolgen — oder zumindest zu ihm stehen —⁽⁶³⁾, erwächst ihm die Unterstützung, die er für das Wanderleben braucht⁽⁶⁴⁾ — mit dem er seine Predigt vom Reich Gottes weiter trägt und zugleich visualisiert —. Unterstützung meint dabei natürlich auch Unterkunft; wieder lassen vereinzelt begebende Züge erkennen, dass es im Kreis

⁽⁶¹⁾ Vgl. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 893: “Without intending to be very precise about the form this will take”.

⁽⁶²⁾ Vgl. dazu nur THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 215. Weitere Indizien sind z.B.: der römische Hauptmann (Mt 8,5-13) oder Josef von Arimathäa (Lk 23,50-53).

⁽⁶³⁾ Vgl. nur HARRINGTON, *Matthew*, 281: “distinction between keeping the commandments and full discipleship”.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Vgl. nur SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 107-111; J.D. CROSSAN – J.L. REED, *Excavating Jesus. Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts* (San Francisco, CA 2001) 122-125: “A Program of Reciprocal Sharing”.

der Jesuanhänger viele gab, die ihm und seinen Jüngern Unterkunft gewährten, man denke an die Episoden bei Maria und Martha (Lk 10,38-42) oder bei Petrus' Familie (Mt 8,14 parr.). Und genau genommen handelt es sich dabei nicht "nur" um Unterstützung, sondern um eine neue Lebensform: Dies "is the heart of the original Jesus movement, a shared egalitarianism of spiritual and material resources" ⁽⁶⁵⁾.

Von diesen Feststellungen ausgehend, wird auch verständlich, aus welchem Grunde sowohl bei Mk als auch bei Lk auf einen weiteren Hörerkreis hingewiesen wird: Gemäß Mk 8,34 kommt das "Volk" zu den Jüngern hinzu, und bei Lk 9,23 sind es "alle". In der Tat kann sich dieses Wort nicht allein auf diejenigen beziehen, die den radikalen Schritt zur wandernden Nachfolge vollziehen, sondern wird wohl alle, die sich zur Jesusbewegung halten, im Blick haben. Wäre dies nicht der Fall, würde eine Unterscheidung von Entschlossenen und Zögerlichen eingeführt, und die Ortsansässigen, die den Wandernden ihr Leben erst ermöglichen, würden mit dem fahlen Nachgeschmack zurückgelassen, dass sie eben Satz (2) nicht leben würden. — Auch von hier aus bestätigt sich die Annahme, dass das Paradox eine grundlegende Wahrheit für alle dem Reich Gottes Verbundenen zum Ausdruck bringt.

V. Über die Gegenwart bzw. dieses Leben hinaus

Ist also deutlich, dass das Paradoxon in seiner Grundform die Lebens-Auffassung Jesu trefflich wieder gibt, so ist doch zugleich selbstverständlich, dass man den Horizont, in dem sich das Wort bewahrheitet, als zeitlich "erstreckt" sehen muss. Insofern Jesus — wie die meisten Exegeten annehmen — in apokalyptischer Weise einen Umbruch der Verhältnisse erwartet hatte und zugleich den Beginn dieses Vorgangs in seinem Handeln zum Ausdruck brachte ⁽⁶⁶⁾, muss das im Paradoxon Ausgesagte nicht unmittelbar erfahrbar sein. Es wird sich in der Gegenwart möglicherweise nur ansatzweise zeigen und sich erst in der Zukunft, oder gar erst nach dem Tod, als evident erweisen. Im Gespräch über den Lohn der Nachfolge klingt das bereits an; denn durch das "hundertfache" bzw. "vielfache Empfangen" wird eine

⁽⁶⁵⁾ CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 341, der (ebd., 341-344) den Unterschied zwischen Almosen bzw. bloßer Unterstützung einerseits und dieser neuen Lebensform andererseits herausstellt.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Vgl. dazu nur LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 275.

“Kompensation” ausgedrückt, die angesichts des Reiches Gottes bereits in diesem Leben anhebt und dann als “ewiges Leben” weiter zu denken ist.

Dieser Horizont des Paradoxons, der sich in die Zukunft und über den Tod hinaus erstreckt, ist auch in den — ebenfalls als “paradox” zu bezeichnenden — ⁽⁶⁷⁾ Seligpreisungen (Mt 5,3-11; Lk 6,20-23) ⁽⁶⁸⁾ zu greifen. Als ursprünglich gelten die Seligpreisungen der πτωχοί (Mt 5,3; Lk 6,20b), der πεινῶντες (Mt 5,6; Lk 6,21a) und der κλαίοντες (Lk 6,21b) bzw. πραεῖς (Mt 5,5) ⁽⁶⁹⁾. Bemerkenswert ist die Konstruktion: Beide Fassungen heben mit nachdrücklich präsentischen Formulierungen an: Die eröffnenden Worte μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί ebenso wie die an die eben selig Gepriesenen gerichtete Zusage “Euer (Lk) / ihrer (Mt) ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία (τοῦ θεοῦ [Lk 6,20] / τῶν οὐρανῶν [Mt 5,3]) sprechen eine gegenwärtige Wirklichkeit aus ⁽⁷⁰⁾: Das Gesegnet-Sein der πτωχοί, der völlig Verarmten, ist als bereits gegenwärtige Teilnahme am Reich Gottes zu verstehen ⁽⁷¹⁾. Dieser Gegenwartsbezug wird durch die Repetition der μακάριοι-Formulierung an den folgenden Satzanfängen beharrlich akzentuiert. Allerdings wird die in der jeweiligen Apodosis zu erwartende Folge im Indikativ Futur formuliert (Mt 5,4-9; Lk 6,21), bis die Aussagenreihe in Mt 5,11 und Lk 6,23 schlussendlich futurisch endet: Den Geschmähten wird ein “Lohn im Himmel” zugesprochen. Zwischen Gegenwart und Eschaton liegen also die futurischen Partizipien, die in gewisser Weise offen lassen, ob sich die jeweilige Seligpreisung schon bald, noch in diesem Leben, oder erst danach erfüllt. Doch der emphatische Beginn, wie überhaupt die synoptische Tradition, drängen darauf, dass sich diese Zusagen — zumindest teilweise — schon jetzt erfüllen. Schließlich bricht das Reich Gottes bereits in der Person Jesu an. Er

⁽⁶⁷⁾ LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 275.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Die lukanische Fassung gilt in den meisten Teilen als die ursprünglichere, vgl. z.B. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20*, 280-281; LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 271; KLEIN, *Lukas*, 244-246.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Vgl. nur LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 273; KLEIN, *Lukas*, 245; BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 196-197; sie alle halten die Worte an Geschmähte und Verfolgte (Mt 5,11-12; Lk 6,22-23) für Gemeindebildung.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Zur Anwendung des Theorems “Sprechakt” vgl. H. WEDER, *Die Rede der Reden. Eine Auslegung der Bergpredigt heute* (Zürich 1994) 40.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Das Miteinander von präsentischen und futurischen Formulierungen wird meist notiert, aber doch vorwiegend futurisch interpretiert, so etwa NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20*, 283-284, 289; HARRINGTON, *Matthew*, 78.82-83; LUZ, *Mt 1-7*, 275, 281.

feiert und isst ja bereits mit den *outcasts*⁽⁷²⁾, trocknet manche Träne, und er eröffnet den *πρωχοί* beispielsweise mit der von Theissen skizzierten Wertrevolution⁽⁷³⁾ eine radikal andere Lebensperspektive. Und sollte die jeweils letzte Seligpreisung der Geschmähten und Verfolgten nachösterlich zu verorten sein⁽⁷⁴⁾, wäre der Gegenwartsbezug der ursprünglichen Aussage noch wesentlich stärker zu veranschlagen.

So trägt die Konzeption der Seligpreisungen der Tatsache Rechnung, dass die mit dem Paradoxon ausgedrückte Lebensauffassung in einem Horizont steht, der über die Grenzen des natürlichen Lebens hinaus geht. Insofern wird hier, wie im Gespräch über den "Lohn der Nachfolge", der Horizont über den Tod hinaus ausgeweitet. Dieselbe Einsicht ist auch im narrativen Horizont der bei Lukas überlieferten Gleichnisse "Reicher Mann und armer Lazarus" (Lk 16,19-31) und "Reicher Kornbauer" (Lk 12,16-21) präsent. Hier findet das im Paradoxon formulierte Umschlagen — sowohl das negative in Satz (1) als auch das positive in Satz (2) — tatsächlich mit dem leiblichen Tod statt. Doch es bleibt festzuhalten, dass die primäre Ausrichtung unseres Paradoxons in der Formulierung einer grundlegenden Wahrheit im Bereich des verkündeten Reiches Gottes zu finden ist. Es hat erst einmal mit dem Diesseits zu tun.

Dabei musste dann freilich auch — je mehr sich die Dinge zuspitzten — das Martyrium in den Blick geraten⁽⁷⁵⁾. So sind hier auch die "Leidensankündigungen"⁽⁷⁶⁾ zu bedenken, die dem Paradoxon insofern gedanklich verwandt sind, als dem Überantwortet-Werden des Menschensohns ein Auferstehen nach drei Tagen gegenübersteht, ein Gedanke, der eine Affinität zu Satz (2) aufweist. Nun wird kaum jemand die "Leidensankündigungen" in der überlieferten Gestalt als jesuanisch einschätzen wollen⁽⁷⁷⁾. Doch steht nichts der Annahme

⁽⁷²⁾ Ein Satt-Werden ist auch in in anderen synoptischen Stücken präsent: Speisung der 5000 (Mt 14,13-21 parr.), Gleichnis vom Gastmahl (Mt 22,8-14 parr.), Der hungernde Lazarus (Lk 16,19-31).

⁽⁷³⁾ THEISSEN, "Jesusbewegung", 343-360.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 232.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Vgl. nur BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 413-421; CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 352; THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 377-385; J.H. CHARLESWORTH, *Jesus within Judaism*. New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries (New York u.a. 1988) 143-145.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ (1) Mk 8,31 parr. Mt 16,21, Lk 9,22.; (2) Mk 9,31 parr. Mt 17,22-23, Lk 9,44; (3) Mk 10,33-34 parr. Mt 20,18-19, Lk 18,31-33.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Vgl. nur CHARLESWORTH, *Jesus within Judaism*, 143-144, THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 377-378.

entgegen, dass auch diese Sätze “durch vorösterliche Sachverhalte mit veranlaßt”⁽⁷⁸⁾ sind, insofern Jesus wohl im Voraus von seinem Tod gesprochen und zugleich eine Hoffnung artikuliert haben dürfte — etwa eine, wie sie in Psalm 22 zum Ausdruck kommt. Auf diesem Text führen weniger die Analogien zwischen der ersten Hälfte des Psalms und den Passionsberichten⁽⁷⁹⁾ als vielmehr die Tatsache, dass auch Gedanken der zweiten Hälfte des Psalms in Jesu Mund nachklingen: So dürfen neben dem Ruf “Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen?” (Ps 22,2; Mt 27,46) auch die Wendungen “Die Elenden sollen essen, dass sie satt werden” (Ps 22,27; Lk 6,21; Mt 5,6) oder “Des Herrn ist das Reich” (Ps 22,29; Mt 6,13 [und generell in der Reich Gottes Verkündigung]) nicht übersehen werden. In diesem zweiten Teil, in Ps 22,30, zeigt sich eine Zuversicht, die über den Tod hinausreicht und die überdies dem Paradoxon sprachlich sehr nahe kommt: “die zum Staub hinab fuhren *und ihr Leben nicht konnten erhalten*”. In der Septuaginta wird der Gedanke zu καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μου αὐτῷ ζῆ umformuliert, was deutlich an unser Paradoxon erinnert. — Doch bleibt es wahrscheinlich, dass sich der Schritt, unser Paradoxon auch auf ein Umschlagen vom Verlieren des physischen Lebens in ein Gewinnen nach dem Tod zu beziehen, erst im fortgeschrittenen Stadium der Wirksamkeit Jesu ergab.

Bei Jesu Auseinandersetzung mit seinem Sterben zeigt sich — neben den mehrfach überlieferten Leidensankündigungen — in den beiden Worten von der Lebenshingabe (Mt 20,28 parr. Mk 10,45)⁽⁸⁰⁾ eine gewisse Differenz zu der eigentlichen Aussage unseres Paradoxons. Während in diesem Logion gewissermaßen von einem Gewinn für denjenigen die Rede ist, der die Sorge um seine ψυχὴ aufgibt, so fehlt dieses Moment in Mt 20,28; Mk 10,45: Hier gewinnt der sich Hingebende nichts für sich, sondern ausschließlich etwas für die anderen bzw. für “viele”. Insofern ist unser Paradoxon mit Jesu Worten zur Lebenshingabe nicht ganz kommensurabel. Das wiederum spricht dafür, dass das uns beschäftigende Logion nicht primär in den Kontext des Todes gehört.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ THEISSEN – MERZ, *Der historische Jesus*, 103; ebd. 103-104 zum Problem des “Ostergrabens” allgemein.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Vgl. nur H. GESE, “Ps 22 und das Neue Testament. Der älteste Bericht vom Tode Jesu und die Entstehung des Herrenmahles” *ZThK* 65 (1968) 1-22.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ BECKER, *Jesus von Nazaret*, 417, u.a. halten dieses Wort für nicht jesuanisch; anders z.B. P. STUHLMACHER, *Versöhnung, Gesetz und Gerechtigkeit*. Aufsätze zur biblischen Theologie (Göttingen 1981) 27-42.

VI. ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ

Bislang wurde mit einer Rekonstruktion des Paradoxons argumentiert, bei welcher das regelmäßig bezeugte ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in Satz (2) keine Berücksichtigung fand. Die Annahme einer sekundären Hinzufügung dieser Wendung wurde bei der Besprechung des "Heilandsrufs" schon einmal berührt. Während viel dafür spricht, dass die "Präzisierung" ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ nicht zum ursprünglichen Wortlaut gehört, dürfte das aber nichts daran ändern, dass sie einer inneren Logik folgt. Jesus ist es, der dieses Wort ausspricht sowie in Wort und Tat veranschaulicht⁽⁸¹⁾, und zahlreiche Formulierungen Jesu drängen auf eine solche Präzisierung des Paradoxons hin:

Der bereits angesprochene "Heilandsruf" hebt mit den emphatischen Worten "Komm her zu mir" an, und er markiert mit "nehmt auf euch mein Joch" eine Zäsur im Leben der Adressaten. Zugleich stellt er dafür — entsprechend Satz (2b) — einen Gewinn in Aussicht: Ruhe für die ψυχῇ. Auch die markanten, antithetischen Formulierungen "Ich aber sage euch ..." ⁽⁸²⁾ formulieren einen scharfen Schnitt, der bisher Vertrautes zurücklässt und Neues etabliert, was wiederum den Hörern zum Besten dienen soll. Nicht weniger markant sind die jesuanischen Wendungen "Wahrlich ich sage euch ..." ⁽⁸³⁾. Nachdrücklich drängt Jesus mit ihnen Gewohntes zurück, um für Neues Platz zu schaffen. Diese und viele weitere Indizien weisen darauf hin, dass schon zu Jesu Lebzeiten Worte gesprochen und Fakten geschaffen wurden, die eine Einfügung des ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ unmittelbar nahe legten und hervorriefen.

So ist ohne weiteres nachvollziehbar, dass sich die Präzisierung ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in Satz (2) als adäquate Ergänzung geradezu aufdrängte. Gleichwohl fällt auf, dass sich diese Formulierung allein in drei synoptischen Kontexten findet: Zunächst in unserem Paradoxon, dann im Gespräch über den Lohn der Nachfolge, im Ausblick auf Drangsale am Ende der Seligpreisungen (Mt 5,11; Lk 6,22 variiert ⁽⁸⁴⁾: ἕνεκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) und schließlich im Hinweis auf Verfolgungen (Mt

⁽⁸¹⁾ Vgl. dazu nur NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, 478: "It may or may not have been part of the original, but it is at least an accurate gloss."

⁽⁸²⁾ Allein bei Matthäus: Mt 5,22.28.32.39.44; 8,11; 12,6.36; 19,9.

⁽⁸³⁾ Allein bei Matthäus: Mt 5,18; 6,2.5.16; 8,10; 10,15.23.42; 11,11; 13,17; 16,28; 17,20; 18,3.13.18.19; 19,23.28; 21,21.31; 23,36; 24,2.34.37; 25,12.40.45; 26,13.21.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Lk variiert das ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ in zwei von drei Fällen: ἕνεκεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ in Lk 18,29 und ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός μου in Lk 21,12.

10,38; Mk 13,9; Lk 21,12). Es wird damit so zum Ausdruck gebracht, dass man im Anschluss an Jesus, der das Paradox vollständig lebte, aus dem angestregten Bemühen um die *ψυχή* heraus- und in die Ruhe hinein findet.

VII. Nachhall in den Paulinen

Seit geraumer Zeit ist wieder im Gespräch, dass die Paulinen, als die frühesten christlichen Dokumente, auch in der Frage nach dem historischen Jesus und den sich an ihn anschließenden Traditionsprozessen Berücksichtigung finden sollten⁽⁸⁵⁾. Nun findet sich das Paradoxon zwar weder als direktes Zitat noch in Form einer augenfälligen Verarbeitung von dessen semantischem Cluster⁽⁸⁶⁾. Das kann allerdings nicht allzu sehr verwundern, z.B. sofern Paulus das Lexem *ψυχή* nur zögerlich gebraucht⁽⁸⁷⁾. Jedenfalls hat Rebell bereits Stellen benannt, welche dem Gedanken unseres Paradoxons deutlich entsprechen. So weist er auf das im Philipperhymnus im Blick auf Christus ausgesagte Verlieren und Gewinnen sowie auf die vorab in Phil 2,5 vollzogene Übertragung des Jesus-Weges auf die Gläubigen hin. Überdies weist Rebell auf Röm 6,8 ("Sind wir mit Christus gestorben, so glauben wir, dass wir auch mit ihm leben werden.") und insbesondere auf 2 Kor 5,15 ("Und er [Christus] ist darum für alle gestorben, damit, die da leben, nicht sich selbst leben, sondern dem, der für sie gestorben und auferstanden ist.") hin⁽⁸⁸⁾.

Meines Erachtens lässt sich hier auch Gal 2,19-20 nennen⁽⁸⁹⁾. V. 20 hebt mit den Worten an: ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός. Schon allein der erste Satzteil ("Ich lebe, doch nicht mehr ich") ist eine

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Vgl. M. THOMPSON, *Clothed with Christ*. The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1-15.13 (JSNTSS 59; Sheffield 1991); D. WENHAM, *Paul. Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI 1995); DERS., *Paul and Jesus. The True Story* (Grand Rapids, MI u.a. 2002); T.D. STILL (Hrsg.), *Jesus and Paul reconnected*. Fresh Pathways into an Old Debate (Grand Rapids, MI u.a. 2007); D.H. AKENSON, *Saint Saul. A Skeleton to the Historical Jesus* (Oxford 2000).

⁽⁸⁶⁾ THOMPSON, *Clothed with Christ*, hat zur Methodik eine Unterscheidung zwischen *quotation*, *allusion* und *reminiscence* vorgeschlagen.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ In den unbestrittenen Paulinen 11 Mal; in der späteren Briefliteratur des NT doppelt so oft.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ REBELL, "Sein Leben verlieren", 215.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Zur Bedeutung dieser Verse im Ganzen des Briefes vgl. M. BACHMANN, *Sünder oder Übertreter*. Studien zur Argumentation in Gal 2,15ff. (WUNT 59; Tübingen 1992) 62,88,115-122.

paradoxe Formulierung, deren Segment οὐκέτι ἐγώ — zumal im Verbund mit dem vorausgehenden "Ich bin mit Christus gestorben" (V. 19b) — ebenso ein deutliches Ende markiert wie das ὃ δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ von Satz (2a). Der mit Satz (2b) artikulierte Fortgang nach der Zäsur wird hier durch das dem οὐκέτι vorausgehende ζῶ angezeigt. Verstärkt werden diese Entsprechungen noch durch den rückwärtigen Kontext. Dort wird die Aussage "Ich bin durchs Gesetz dem Gesetz gestorben ..." (V. 19aα) ebenfalls in paradoxer Weise weitergeführt: "... damit ich Gott lebe." (V. 19aβ). Die Konstellation von 2,20a wird dann durch die Wendungen ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός, und ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ christologisch präzisiert, was der synoptischen Präzisierung des Paradoxons durch "um Christi willen" entspricht. Insofern das ἐγώ in den Versen 18-21 "ausnahmslos Stilmittel, nicht (eigentlich) individuelles, sondern typisches Ich" ist⁽⁹⁰⁾, ergibt sich die gleiche Allgemeingültigkeit wie sie unserem Paradoxon zu eigen ist. Handelt es sich in Gal 2,19-20 um eine "Verarbeitung" unsres Jesus-Logions, dann wird hier, ganz im ursprünglichen Sinne, auf ein "Umschlagen" als eine Erfahrung in diesem Leben abgehoben. Dieser Eindruck wird durch das emphatische νῦν⁽⁹¹⁾ nur noch verstärkt.

Im Blick auf 2 Kor sind die Beobachtungen REBELLS noch erheblich zu ergänzen. Am Ende der Texteinheit 3,1-6,10 bzw. der Untereinheit 5,16-6,10⁽⁹²⁾ findet sich eine ganze Kaskade von Paradoxa, in der — in unserem Zusammenhang — vor allem die Zeile ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν (6,9) hervorsticht⁽⁹³⁾. Dem entspricht die zuvor, in 4,10-11, formulierte paradoxe Verschränkung vom Sterben und Leben Jesu in der entsprechenden Erfahrung des Apostels⁽⁹⁴⁾:

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Vgl. nur BACHMANN, *Sünder*, 45, der ebd., 43-45, diese Auffassung evident macht.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Siehe dazu U. SCHMIDT, *Nicht vergeblich empfangen*. Eine Untersuchung zum 2.Korintherbrief als Beitrag zur Frage nach der paulinischen Einschätzung des Handelns (BWANT 162; Stuttgart 2004) 78-80.

⁽⁹²⁾ Zur Abgrenzung dieser Passage siehe SCHMIDT, *Nicht vergeblich empfangen*, 64-71.

⁽⁹³⁾ In der von mir eingesehenen Literatur bespricht einzig BEARDSLEE, "Saving one's Life" 57-72, 2 Kor 6,7-10 im Zusammenhang mit unserem Paradoxon.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ R.P. MARTIN, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Waco, TX 1986) 87, sieht in diesen Versen "a strange paradox", das er auf Tod und Auferstehung Christi Bezug nehmen lässt, nicht aber auf unser Paradoxon.

6,9	... als Sterbende	und siehe wir leben.
4,10	Wir tragen allezeit das Sterben Jesu an unserm Leibe, damit auch das Leben Jesu an unserm Leibe offenbar werde.
4,11	Denn wir, die wir leben, werden immerdar in den Tod gegeben um Jesu willen, damit auch das Leben Jesu offenbar werde an unserm sterblichen Fleisch.
	Wer aber sein Leben verliert um meinetwillen	der wird's erhalten bzw. finden.

Die Entsprechungen sind nicht zu übersehen: “das Sterben Jesu am Leib tragen” und “als Lebende in den Tod gegeben” erinnern an den Verlust der *ψυχή* in Satz (2a), und die Charakterisierung “um Jesu willen” (*διὰ Ἰησοῦν* [V. 11]) ist als Parallele zum synoptischen *ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ* zu lesen. Das “Leben Jesu”, das sich am Leib bzw. im Fleisch offenbart, ist dann mit dem Finden des Lebens in Satz (2b) zu verbinden. Es soll im Übrigen nicht unerwähnt bleiben, dass es hier nirgends um die Abwendung einer Todesgefahr geht, sondern um einen fortwährenden Vorgang in diesem Leben⁽⁹⁵⁾.

Zwischen diesen beiden Belegen (2 Kor 4,10-11; 6,9) findet sich dann nicht nur die bereits vermerkte Aussage in 5,15, sondern auch diejenige in 5,17: “Ist jemand in Christus, so ist er eine neue Kreatur; das Alte ist vergangen, siehe, Neues ist geworden.” Parallelen können auch hier benannt werden: Dass Satz (1a) Altes bezeichnen soll, dem in Satz (2b) Neues gegenüber steht, liegt auf der Hand; dort wird der Verlust mit *ἀπόλλυμι*, hier mit *παρέρχομαι* artikuliert; dem Übergang durch ein Verzicht auf ein *σῶζειν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ* im Jesus-Logion entspricht bei Paulus eine Neuschöpfung, und dabei korrespondiert dem *ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ* das *ἐν Χριστῷ*. Dass Paulus nicht rein individualistisch verstanden werden darf, zeigt die Terminologie, die mit *τὰ ὀρχαῖα* und *καινὴ κτίσις* den Gedanken eines neuen Äons zum Ausdruck bringt⁽⁹⁶⁾, ähnlich wie das bei der Verkündigung Jesu durch *βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* signalisiert wird.

Dürfen die genannten paulinischen Aussagen als Anklang an unser Paradoxon oder gar als dessen Verarbeitung verstanden werden, so ist das auch für unsere Frage nach Leben und Tod im jesuanischen Logion von Relevanz. Paulus bringt ja eine lebensverändernde Erfahrung zum

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Inwiefern die Aussage “Wir tragen das Sterben Jesu an unserm Leibe” als Nachhall der Aufforderung zur Aufnahme des Kreuzes (Mk 8,34; Mt 16,24; Lk 9,23) zu verstehen ist, wäre zu prüfen.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Vgl. dazu nur MARTIN, *2 Corinthians*, 152; V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; New York u.a. 1984) 332-333.

Ausdruck, die nur in Ausnahmefall (in dem sich freilich der Apostel immer wieder befindet) auf den physischen Tod zu beziehen ist. Zudem darf aus den besprochenen Anklängen an das Paradoxon wohl auch gefolgert werden, dass das ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ zu einem recht frühen Traditionsbestand gehörte. Doch wie früh, ob es bereits von Jesus selbst ausgesprochen oder unmittelbar nach seiner irdischen Existenz aus der inneren Logik heraus eingetragen wurde, das lässt sich wohl kaum entscheiden.

*
* *

Es sollte deutlich geworden sein, dass das Paradoxon vom Verlieren und Finden der ψυχή nicht sofort und nicht hauptsächlich unter dem “Schatten des Todes“ zu lesen und zu verstehen ist. Zunächst und vor allem wird damit eine, ja die grundlegende Wahrheit im Raum des Reiches Gottes zum Ausdruck gebracht. Und sie ist nicht allein für diejenigen Wahrheit, die den radikalen Schritt in die direkte (Wander-) Nachfolge Jesu antreten — oder, wie Paulus, unter besonders erschwerten Bedingungen zu leben haben —, sondern genauso für diejenigen, die ortsansässig bleiben, und auf ihre Weise vor Ort nicht dem Streben nach einem Erhalt der ψυχή verfallen, sondern im Einflussbereich des Reiches Gottes leben und bleiben, bzw. in und als καὶνὴ κτίσις leben.

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SUMMARY

Jesus' paradox of losing and finding one's life is well attested. According to its contexts, interpreters relate the logion predominantly to martyrdom and death. But a closer look reveals that this word is an assertion in favour of life which functions as a maxim of Jesus' teaching and view of life. It is the context many of his sayings and behavioral patterns. The issue of a “recompense” after death is merely a consequence of the original intention.

1 Cor 9,5: The Women of the Apostles (*)

The women of the apostles that Paul mentions in 1 Cor 9,5 could have played an important role in the growth of earliest Christianity. Although this claim has appeared elsewhere, I will develop an extended argument to strengthen the position. Several old but still present strands in the history of interpretation, Paul's references to missionary couples, his linguistic usage, and some similar marriages in ancient Greco-Roman culture illuminate the probable function of the women as missionary assistants of the apostles.

History of interpretation (or reception) does need an *apologia pro vita sua* for modern scholars. Instead of moving immediately from Paul's text to modern research, a short detour through the past can strengthen and enrich scholarly understanding of both the problems and possibilities of the biblical material⁽¹⁾. In the case of 1 Cor 9,5 four major questions have emerged. (1.) Did the women participate in the mission? (2.) Did they follow the apostles to be instructed? (3.) Or were they just for material support⁽²⁾? (4.) Were the women wives⁽³⁾? The last question is related to the historical issue of Peter's wife and children (if any). Views on the celibacy of clerics have been closely related to the last two questions⁽⁴⁾. With the history of the text's reception as a resource, 1 Cor 9,5 becomes a rich source instead of a text that the commentator glosses quickly.

Below I will briefly consider the question of Cephas' identity, discuss the text-critical evidence, and then look at the major strands in the past understanding of the women and their marriages (or not) to the

(*) I read an earlier version of this paper at the 2006 SNTS meeting in Aberdeen. I am grateful to Profs. Beverly Gaventa, Martin Hengel, Birger Olsson, and many others for their critical comments. For bibliographical help, I thank Profs. Jacques Gres-Gayer, Frank Matera, and Nelson Minnich.

(1) Cf the prolific use of interpretive history made by U. LUZ, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (EKK 1; Zurich 1985-2002). Dates below are primarily from ODCC³.

(2) The *New Jerusalem Bible*'s note to 9,5 remarks that the wives were "for the purpose of attending to their material welfare".

(3) The *New Jerusalem Bible*, *NAB*, and *New Revised Standard Version* all assume they were wives.

(4) For a convenient history cf P. DELHAYE, "Celibacy, Clerical, History of", *NCE* II, 322-328.

apostles. Paul's discussion of missionary partners in his letters, the semantics of several key terms in the verse, some parallels in antiquity, and a reassessment of ancient households will complete the investigation.

I. Cephas

Paul's defense of his apostleship to the Corinthians includes a rare but intriguing glimpse into the personal lives of the apostles. They have authority to take a "sister woman/wife" (ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα) with them on their missionary journeys as do the brothers of the Lord and Cephas. Cephas' identity is important for the argument of the essay, because it is clear that Peter was married before his call to discipleship. Bart Ehrman has objected to the identification of Cephas and Peter based on Paul's shift of names between Gal 2,7-8 and the rest of its context and an ancient tradition that Cephas and Peter were different people⁽⁵⁾. Clement of Alexandria believes Cephas is one of the seventy and a homonym of Peter the apostle⁽⁶⁾. *EpAp* 2 (both men were of the eleven) is also an old witness (II C.E.). However, the semantic equivalence (rock) alone makes the identity probable. Gal 2,7.8.9.11 and 14 seem to use both names interchangeably. The Johannine tradition (John 1,42) assumes the equivalence, and Matt 16,18 assumes the pun⁽⁷⁾. Other sources in primitive Christian tradition (Mark 1,30 par) hold that Peter was married, and Paul viewed him as a traveling apostle (Gal 2,7-8).

⁽⁵⁾ B. EHRMAN, "Cephas and Peter", *JBL* 109 (1990) 463-474. Besides "Peter" in Gal 2,7-8, Paul uses "Cephas" (1 Cor 1,12; 3,22; 9,5; 15,5; Gal 1,1.2.9.11.14). See E.G. KRAELING, *The Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri*. New Documents of the Fifth Century B.C. from the Jewish Colony at Elephantine (New Haven 1953) 8:10 (227) for an עֲקֵב בֶּר כֶּפֶא. J.A. FITZMYER, *The Aramaic Kephā' and Peter's Name in the New Testament*, *Ibid.*, *To Advance the Gospel*. New Testament Studies (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge, U.K. 1988) 112-124, esp. 115-118, argues that כֶּפֶא is a proper name.

⁽⁶⁾ *Hypot.* 5.4 (GCS Clemens Al. III; 196,9-13 Stählin – Früchtel – Treu = Eus., *Hist. eccl.* 1.12.2).

⁽⁷⁾ John 1,42 inclines or rather forces EHRMAN to believe that there were two people named "Cephas" in ancient Christian tradition ("Cephas", 473, n. 33, 474). Other scholars who reject the identity may be found in H.-D. BETZ, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1979) 96-97 (Betz does not accept the hypothesis that the two are different) and FITZMYER, *Aramaic*, 114, 120 n. 15 (he rejects the hypothesis).

II. The Text

The variations in the textual tradition perhaps indicate some of the interpretive possibilities. There are some interesting alternatives.

γυναικας (women): F, G, ar, b, Tert⁽⁸⁾, Pelagius⁽⁹⁾, Ps. Cyprian⁽¹⁰⁾, Hilary⁽¹¹⁾, Sedulius⁽¹²⁾, Jerome⁽¹³⁾, Helvidius⁽¹⁴⁾, Clement of Alex.^{1/3} (*Paed.* 2.1.9.1 [GCS Clemens Al. I; 159,28-30 Stählin – Treu]), Aphrahaat⁽¹⁵⁾.

mulierem sororem (woman sister): Hubertianus (Brit. Mus. Add. 24142), z* (Harley 1772), and vg^{cl}.

mulierem (woman): Ambrosiaster⁽¹⁶⁾.

sorores mulieres (sisters women): Greek MSS according to Jerome⁽¹⁷⁾.

sorores (sisters): The Greek according to Sedulius⁽¹⁸⁾.

sororem mulierculam (sister little woman): *Biblia Latina*⁽¹⁹⁾

ἀδελφὴν γυναικας (sister woman): other witnesses.

⁽⁸⁾ All occurrences: *Cast.* 8.3, *Mon.* 8.4, *Pud.* 14.11 (CChr.SL 2; 1027,21-22; 1239,21-22; 1307,43 KROYMANN – DEKKERS).

⁽⁹⁾ *In I Cor* 9,5 (A. SOUTER, *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St Paul.* I. Introduction / II. Text and Apparatus Criticus [TextsS 9/1-2; Cambridge 1922-1926] II, 175, 5-7).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Ps. Cyprian, *Sing.* 20 (CSEL 3/3; 196,3-8 HARTEL). G. ZUNTZ (*The Text of the Epistles.* A Disquisition upon the *Corpus Paulinum* [London 1953] 138) refers to both Cypr-appendix (Ps. Cypr.) and Macrobius in his note. Macrobius (the bishop) was once suspected of writing Ps. Cypr., *De sing.* See J.B. BAUER, "Uxores circumducere (1 Kor 9,5)", *BZ* n. s. 3 (1959) 94-103, esp. 95.

⁽¹¹⁾ Hilary, *Psal.* 118, 14.14 (SC 347; 144,12-14 MILHAU).

⁽¹²⁾ See the reading *sorores* below.

⁽¹³⁾ *uxores* in *Ep.* 22,20 (CSEL 54; 171,5 HILBERG).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Jerome, *Helu.* (PL 23; 204A). Helvidius read *uxores* (wives).

⁽¹⁵⁾ *Dem.* 6.5 (PO I/1; 264,22-265,2 PARISOT).

⁽¹⁶⁾ H. J. VOGELS follows the evidence of the MSS for *mulieres* here in *Ad Cor. prima* 9,5 (CSEL 81/2, 98,4-5). The singular appears in five MSS.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Jerome, *Iou.* 1,26 (PL 23; 257A); a reading he adopted in *Ep.* 123.14 (CSEL 56/1; 89,16 HILBERG) and *Matth.* 27,55 (SC 259; 302, 418 BONNARD).

⁽¹⁸⁾ *Collect. in ep. I ad Cor.* (VL.AGLB 32; 406,17 FREDE – STANJEK = PL 103; 145C). Sedulius remarks that the Greek text only mentions "sisters" and not *mulieres* (women), which he finds in the Latin text.

⁽¹⁹⁾ *Biblia Latina cum Glossa Ordinaria.* Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps Adolf Rusch of Strassburg 1480-1481 (intr. by K. FROELICH and M. T. GIBSON) (Turnhout 1992) IV, 320.

Günther Zuntz chooses “women” as the correct reading because of its geographical dispersion before the main text types emerged: “It is original, the crude expression suits Paul’s polemical fervour and was bound to provoke the various softening substitutes which the other witnesses transmit”⁽²⁰⁾. Clearly some of the old Latin witnesses such as Tertullian indicate that there were old variations. Contra Zuntz, when one carefully analyzes the interpretation of the text in individuals such as Aphrahaat it is not at all clear that “women” was a “crude expression”⁽²¹⁾. Aphrahaat (IV C.E.), the ascetic Persian sage, in a discussion of monks, refers to the celibate example of John the Baptist and Elijah. He then mentions the Apostle (Paul) and Barnabas and quotes 1 Cor 9,5 with the reading “women” instead of “sister woman”. He adds a phrase that apparently ascribes the view to Paul that “it was not righteous” (to take women around)⁽²²⁾. The reading “women” morphed easily into the interpretation “servant women” (in the singular *serviens matrona*). “Sister woman” seems a far more problematic text for the interpreter, and most likely was Paul’s expression.

III. The Women as Assistants in Mission

Clement provided a very specific function for the women whom the apostles took with them. In a passage against those who reject marriage, Clement states that Peter was married and that he (along with the Philip of Acts — an apostle also in Clement’s view) “made children”. After quoting 1 Cor 9,5, he notes of the other apostles that they devoted themselves without distraction to the proclamation and led around their women (τὰς γυναικάς) not as wives (γαμετάς) but as sisters to be fellow ministers (συνδιακόνους) to household managing women (τὰς οἰκουροὺς γυναικάς). Through these women the teaching of the Lord was introduced into the women’s quarters (τὴν γυναικωνίτην) without slander⁽²³⁾. That he understands the women to

⁽²⁰⁾ ZUNTZ, *The Text*, 138. BAUER, “Uxores”, 95 agrees with the reading.

⁽²¹⁾ For a similar judgment cf J. KREMER, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther* (RNT; Regensburg 1997) 185.

⁽²²⁾ Aphrahaat, *Dem.* 6.5 (*PO* I/1; 264,22–265,2 PARISOT).

⁽²³⁾ Clem. Alex., *Str.* 3.6.52.5–53.3 (GCS Clemens Alexandrinus II; 220,15–24 STÄHLIN – FRÜCHTEL). Cp. οἰκουροὺς in 4.20.128.1 (304,30 St./Fr.) and the trans. in G. BRAY (*1–2 Corinthians* [Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 7; Downers Grove 1999] 80): “wives ... as Christian sisters rather than as spouses” (from FC 85, 289).

be wives is likely given the fact that Peter, whom he views as an apostle, is with his wife to the end of her life. He also has a narrative in which Peter exhorts his wife to remember the Lord as she is led off to martyrdom⁽²⁴⁾. Clement believes the apostles observed celibacy if they were married.

One can trace Clement's approach through Byzantium, the Reformation, and the Counter Reformation into the modern era where it has played what can probably be described as the most important role in contemporary exegesis of all the ancient strands of interpretation. Recent literature on the role of women in early Christian mission has emphasized Clement's text⁽²⁵⁾.

IV. The Women Sought Instruction

One of the first who takes the approach that the women sought teaching from the apostles is Severian of Gabala (c. 400 C.E.). He writes that "He, by saying 'woman' and adding 'sister', makes clear what is fitting, decent⁽²⁶⁾, and pure (τὸ πρέπον καὶ σῶφρον καὶ καθαρὸν) for she who travels along, whether she was a wife (σύζυγος) or not. For it is clear that women traveled with Peter and the others yearning for their teaching"⁽²⁷⁾. Chrysostom (d. c. 407) also argues that women went around with the apostles to hear their teaching, in a text to

⁽²⁴⁾ *Str.* 7.11.63.3-64.2 (GCS Clemens Al. III; 46,1-9 STÄHLIN – FRÜCHTEL – TREU).

⁽²⁵⁾ E. SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *In Memory of Her. A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York 1990) 201, n. 43 translates: "wives ... not as women with whom they had marriage relations but as sisters". C. OSIEK and D.L. BALCH, *Families in the New Testament World. Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY 1997) 170. M.Y. MACDONALD, "Was Celsus Right? The Role of Women in the Expansion of Early Christianity", *Early Christian Families in Context. An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (eds. D.L. BALCH – C. OSIEK) (Grand Rapids, MI 2003) 168.

⁽²⁶⁾ Used for young Christian wives in Tit 2,5. Cf J. L. KOVACS' translation (*I Corinthians*. Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators [Grand Rapids, MI 2005] 147): "fittingly chaste and pure".

⁽²⁷⁾ K. STAAB, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben* (NTAbh 15; Münster 1933) 256,4-7. Although "yokefellow" can have many senses (see the lexicons), here the context shows that it means "wife". See BAGD s.v. and K. BALDINGER, *Semantic Theory. Towards a Modern Semantics* (Oxford 1980) 15-17, 20-21, on how context usually selects a meaning from those available.

be discussed below in the section on περιάγειν⁽²⁸⁾. This tradition survived into the Reformation and the Counter Reformation and will play a crucial role in the argument to be developed below, although it has played little to no role in recent scholarship on the text of Paul.

V. The Women Provided Material Support

The dominant view for many years in the ancient church (both Latin and Greek) was that the women (not wives) provided material support for the apostles. Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine developed it⁽²⁹⁾. Until the Reformation this was the usual interpretation, but it has survived well into the modern era with its inclusion in the *New Jerusalem Bible*'s footnote to the verse.

VI. The Women as Wives

This issue still needs to be addressed because it continues to appear in the contemporary exegesis of the verse. The apostles only had wives before the gospel according to Jerome⁽³⁰⁾. Protestant Reformers such as Calvin believed the women were wives⁽³¹⁾. In the era since the Enlightenment the tendency has been to see the women as wives, although there are some dissenters. Scholars who interpret the women as wives (with no further role mentioned) include: J.S. Semler, Johannes Weiss, Hans Lietzmann, Hans Conzelmann, W.F. Orr and J.A. Walter, Gordon Fee, C.K. Barrett and Jacob Kremer⁽³²⁾. Jerome

⁽²⁸⁾ Chrysostom, *Hom. lxxiii in Matt.* 3 (PG 58; 677).

⁽²⁹⁾ Tertullian, *Mon.* 8.5, 8.6 (CChr.SL 2; 1239,26-28; 1240,38-93 DEKKERS). Only Peter had a wife (*Mon.* 8.4 [1239,21-22 DEKKERS]). Jerome, *Matth.* 27,55 (302,413-17 BONNARD), Augustine, *Mon.* 4.5-5.6 (CChr.SL 41; 538,3-539,24 ZYCHA). KOVACS provides much context for this comment (*1 Corinthians*, 146-147).

⁽³⁰⁾ Jerome, *Iou.* 1,26 (PL 23; 256B-D) with reference to Matt 19,27.29 (reading "wives" in the last verse).

⁽³¹⁾ Cf. e.g., J. CALVIN, *Ep. Pauli ad Cor.* I, 9,4 (eds. E. REUSS – A. ERICHSON – L. HORST) (CR 77; Braunschweig 1892, ¹1546) 439.

⁽³²⁾ D. IO. SAL. SEMLERI, *Paraphrasis in primam Pauli ad Corinthios epistolam* (Halle an der Saale 1770) 213-214. J. WEISS, *Der erste Korintherbrief* (MeyerK; Göttingen 1910) 234. H. LIETZMANN, *An die Korinther I-II* (HNT 9; expanded by W. G. KÜMMEL; Tübingen ⁵1969) 40-41. H. CONZELMANN, *1 Corinthians* (trans. J.W. LEITCH; ed. G.W. MACRAE) (Philadelphia, PA 1975) 153. W.F. ORR and J.A. WALTHER, *1 Corinthians* (AB 32; Garden City, NY 1976) 238. G. FEE, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1987)

Murphy-O'Connor, using the proverb "eat, drink, and be merry", attempts to explain Paul's decision to introduce wives into the discussion⁽³³⁾. The fact that Paul does not name the wives of the apostles probably indicates that they had a subordinate role (if any) in the mission⁽³⁴⁾.

VII. Partners in Mission in the Pauline Epistles

The literature on the role of women in early Christian mission has drawn a clear focus on missionary couples such Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16, 4; 1 Cor 16,19; Acts 18,2.26). Why has Priscilla, for example, not been defined as "providing material support" to Aquila in his work of mission? Here Paul is explicit. He calls them "my fellow workers in Christ Jesus" (Rom 16,3 τοὺς συνεργούς μου ἐν Χριστῷ - Ἰησοῦ) who have risked their necks for him (Rom 16,4). They have a church in their home (Rom 16,5) and earlier had one in Asia (1 Cor 16,19)⁽³⁵⁾. Although the episode cannot be used to determine Paul's view of the couple, Luke willingly portrays Priscilla (along with Aquila) providing instruction about "the way" to Apollos in Acts 18,26. Both Luke and Paul mention Priscilla first in two texts (Acts 18,26, Rom 16,3). One also cannot assume the specific nature of their marriage. Margaret Y. MacDonald, for example, in a discussion of women as missionary partners in the Pauline churches, argues that it is possible that even those who understood themselves as "husband and wife" had "given up sex for the sake of the gospel"⁽³⁶⁾.

Andronicus and Junia (Rom 16,7; well known among the apostles) were also possibly couples active in the mission. Paul similarly mentions several pairs of women. Tryphaena and Tryphosa have

403. C.K. BARRETT, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC 7; Peabody, MA 1993) 203. KREMER, *Der Erste Brief*, 185.

⁽³³⁾ J. MURPHY – O'CONNOR, "The First Letter to the Corinthians", NJBC 798-815, esp. 806 with reference to BAUER, "Uxores", 99-100.

⁽³⁴⁾ See M. HENGEL, *Der unterschätzte Petrus*. Zwei Studien (Tübingen 2006) 209, n. 441, for the names given Peter's wife and children in Syriac writers. The name WEISS (*Der erste Korintherbrief*, 234) mentions (Concordia) ultimately depends on a forged volume, but here is not the place for such an investigation.

⁽³⁵⁾ Possibly Ephesus as in 1 Cor 16,8 (and Acts 18,26).

⁽³⁶⁾ MACDONALD, "Was Celsus Right?", 157-184, esp. 163 (with reference to 1 Cor 7,5.36-38).

“labored in the Lord” (Rom 16,12)⁽³⁷⁾. Euodia and Syntyche, although they are in need of reconciliation with each other, have “fought at Paul’s side in the gospel”. Clearly they are fellow workers in the mission (Phil 4,2-3). None of this is controversial, but the question certainly arises: “Does the existence of missionary couples and partners in the Pauline epistles illuminate 1 Cor 9,5”? The ambiguity exists because Paul does not explicitly define the role of the women whom he mentions in that verse. That ambiguity has helped create the different interpretive trajectories associated with the verse. Some of the women might have been more involved in the mission than others. Carolyn Osiek and Margaret MacDonald make a telling comment on the history of interpretation: “The text should probably be taken as an acknowledgment of the importance of missionary partnerships to the success of the movement, rather than simply as a reference to a ‘domestic’ supporter of the husband’s missionary work as has traditionally be assumed from the patristic era to the modern day”⁽³⁸⁾.

VIII. Semantics

1. ἀδελφός and ἀδελφή

For additional illumination one needs to examine the semantics of Paul’s unusual expression, “sister woman” (ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα). First, some negative results. In the *TLG*, I have been unable to find the expression elsewhere in a text in which both words describe the same woman, and I have had the same experience with “brother man/person” (using ἀνὴρ and ἄνθρωπος). The only exception is a formulation in the vocative in Acts that the *NAB* translates as “countrymen” in an occurrence in which Paul addresses fellow Jews (Acts 23,1; ἀνδρες ἀδελφοί)⁽³⁹⁾. Peter uses it for fellow Christians in Acts 1,16. It gives little help since one can simply put a comma between the two words (“men, brothers”) and need not translate with

⁽³⁷⁾ On such missionary partnerships see M.R. D’ANGELO, “Women Partners in the New Testament”, *JFSR* 6 (1990) 65-86.

⁽³⁸⁾ C. OSIEK and M.Y. MACDONALD with J.H. TULLOCH, *A Woman’s Place. House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN 2006) 27.

⁽³⁹⁾ This appears frequently in Acts (1,16; 2,29.37; 7,2.26; 13,15.26.38; 15,7.13; 22,1; 23,1.6; 28,17). C. LAPIDE, *Commentaria in omnes divi Pauli epistola. Comm. in I ep. ad Cor. cap. IX* (Antwerp 1665) 263 noticed this expression. For ἀδελφός used for people from the same country see BAGD s.v. § 3 (as in Rom 9,3).

“brother men”. But it is of some use since “brothers” is being combined with another noun. 4 Macc 8,19 also has the identical expression in the vocative. Classical authors do not combine the two words. A syntactic use in any case other than the vocative would be quite relevant.

Although it is a little far afield, the jurist Paulus (early III C.E.) apparently used *virum fratrum* (“man brother”) in the *Sentences* in an expression in which a woman, while being married, can receive her dowry back to help support a grown brother who is in need or a sister (*ut egentum virum fratrem sororemve sustineat*)⁽⁴⁰⁾. In that text I take *vir* to imply a grown man (i.e. not a young brother who would still be in the care of his family). The example, however, takes the exegete little further in illuminating Paul’s expression, but it does show that in Latin and in Greek the expression is quite rare.

The use of “brother” and “sister” in the Pauline epistles contributes some advance to exegetical research. As in the case of missionary partners, scholars who have investigated the question of women in early Christian mission have provided the greatest insights here. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, interpreting “brothers” in Phil 4,21 as “missionary co-workers”, understands the double accusative in 9,5 to mean that the women were also missionary co-workers⁽⁴¹⁾. Certainly the “brothers” of Phil 4,21 are associates of Paul, but it is difficult to show their exact role in the church (mission workers or just fellow Christians?) since Paul is silent about it. Mary Rose D’Angelo reads the text as “to bring along a sister as a wife, that is, to be accompanied by a wife who is also supported as a missionary”. She proceeds to argue that “sister”, like “brother”, can designate a partner in mission⁽⁴²⁾. Paul, designating himself as “apostle”, pairs himself with a “brother” in 1 Cor 1,1, 2 Cor 1,1, and Phlm 1 who is an assistant — the

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Paulus, *Sent.* II *apud* Justinian, *Dig.* 23.3.73.1 (MOMMSEN – KRUEGER). T. MOMMSEN emended the expression (*virum*), but P. KRUEGER was willing to keep it. See the apparatus ad loc. This is the only usage I have found on the PHI CD ROM 5.3 (1) Latin texts (Packard Humanities Institute 1991). The *Sententiae* are probably a fourth century compilation.

⁽⁴¹⁾ SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *In Memory*, 172. Paul does, however, appear to place some kind of limit on their participation in the mission (233). Although BAUER (“Uxores”, 97) admitted the role of women in the Pauline mission, he was sceptical of the position that 9,5 is not marriage but a material and spiritual association for ministry.

⁽⁴²⁾ D’ANGELO, “Women Partners”, 73-74. Martha is engaged in ministry (διακονία = διάκονος) with her “sister” in Luke 10,39-40 (77-81).

equivalent of “sister” in 9,5⁽⁴³⁾. In addition, the “sister-wife/woman” was “not necessarily the conjugal mate of one’s pre-conversion life” according to Margaret MacDonald⁽⁴⁴⁾. She notes that one cannot be certain about the relationship since γυναίκα can mean “woman” and not “wife”⁽⁴⁵⁾.

In the case of 1 Cor 1,1 Sosthenes is “the brother”. Timothy is “the brother” in 2 Cor 1,1 and Phlm 1,1. It is clear that Timothy was a fellow worker with Paul (Rom 16,21 ὁ συνεργός — to take only one example). Presumably Sosthenes was also. These brothers are “assistants in mission”. The more difficult question is: Can the word itself bear that meaning? It is undisputed that it can mean fellow Christians (as in Rom 1,13 etc.)⁽⁴⁶⁾. In the cases mentioned above it could have the sense “brother” (as a sort of title), but may refer to an individual who is a missionary assistant⁽⁴⁷⁾. Only the larger context makes the reference certain.

The use of “sister” in Rom 16,1 is of equal importance. The context indicates that she is a “*diakonos*” (διάκονον) of the church in Cenchrae and helper or benefactor of Paul (Rom 16,2 προστάτις). Since Paul is willing to use the same word (*diakonos*) for himself (1 Cor 3,5; 2 Cor 3,6; 6,4; 11,23) and even for Christ (Rom 15,8), it seems unnecessary to restrict Phoebe’s role to “material support” of the church in Cenchrae. Again it is the context that shows that the reference of “sister” in Phoebe’s case is to a missionary assistant of Paul. MacDonald notes that Phoebe (Rom 16,1-2) was clearly a benefactor of Paul himself, and that the title “sister” in her case is the same as that used for missionary partners in 1 Cor 9,5⁽⁴⁸⁾. On the other hand, the use of “sister” in Phlm 2 for Apphia may be “sister as fellow Christian”.

⁽⁴³⁾ D’ANGELO, “Women Partners”, 74, 79.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ MACDONALD, “Was Celsus Right?”, 163.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ M.Y. MACDONALD, “Reading Real Women through the Undisputed Letters of Paul”, *Women & Christian Origins* (eds. R.S. KRAEMER and M.R. D’ANGELO) (New York – Oxford 1999) 199-220, esp. 202.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ BAGD s.v. § 2.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ See BALDINGER, *Semantic Theory*, 3-7, 246 for the distinction between sense and reference (using similar terminology). The classic example is: “evening star” and “morning star” have different senses but the same reference. In 1 Thess 3,2 (“brother”) Timothy is “our fellow worker in the gospel of Christ”.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ MACDONALD, “Was Celsus Right?”, 166. She compares the usage to “brother” for Paul’s partner Timothy in 2 Cor 1,1; Phlm 1, and 1 Thess 3,2. See also her discussion of “sister” for a missionary partner in “Reading”, 206 (and the partnership in Rom 16,15).

The conclusion is that one of the senses of ἀδελφή was probably a title — “sister”. Its reference in the case of such a use would be a missionary, a member of a missionary couple, or one of a group of missionaries. One is left with the impression that since the “sister women” of 1 Cor 9,5 accompany the apostles on their missionary journeys, the usage of “sister” to refer to a missionary assistant may be the correct reading of the verse.

2. περιάγειν or περιάγεσθαι

“Lead around” (περιάγειν or περιάγεσθαι) is also important for understanding the interpretive situation⁽⁴⁹⁾. Demosthenes uses the verb for leading around three slaves, and Diodorus Siculus uses it for Dionysus’ practice of taking a crowd of women with his army⁽⁵⁰⁾. Plutarch’s Marius took a Syrian prophetess named Martha around in a litter reverently⁽⁵¹⁾. None of these examples involves sexuality. For Greek texts, Bauer only appealed to an example where a sexual relationship was implied and erroneously concluded that the verb in 1 Cor 9,5 necessarily implies a marriage⁽⁵²⁾. One can certainly find such usages. According to Athenaeus, Philip of Macedon did not bring women with him to war, but Darius “led around” three hundred and sixty concubines⁽⁵³⁾. The most telling usage comes from several centuries after Paul. Chrysostom, in a homily on Genesis, describes Abraham’s statement to Sarah that if the Egyptians see him and know that he leads her around as wife, then they will probably take possession of her, thus fulfilling their almost maniacal lust, and will then kill him⁽⁵⁴⁾. Since Cephas/Peter was married and given

⁽⁴⁹⁾ This was seen by BAUER, “Uxores”, 101. He, for example, cites Juv. 1.122 (*praegnans et circumducitur uxor* “followed by a pregnant wife”) against Augustine’s argument that includes this phrase, “Nor did Paul say ‘take’ (*ducendi*) but ‘lead around’ (*circumducendi*)” in *Mon.* 4.5-5.6 (538,3-539,24 ZYCHA).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Demosthenes, *Pro Phorm.* 45 καὶ τρεῖς παῖδας ἀκολούθους περιάγει. Diod. Sic. 2.38.6 ἱστοροῦσι δ’ αὐτὸν καὶ γυναικῶν πλῆθος μετὰ τοῦ στρατοπέδου περιάγεσθαι.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Plutarch, *Marius* 17.2 καὶ γάρ τινα Σύραν γυναῖκα, Μάρθαν ὄνομα, μαρτυρεῖσθαι λεγομένην ἐν φορείῳ κατακειμένην σεμνῶς περιήγετο.

⁽⁵²⁾ BAUER, “Uxores”, 101. In Xen., *Cyr.* 2.2.28 Cyrus asks a captain if it is good that “you take this youth around with you?” (LSJ 1367b “have always by one” περιάγει τοῦτο τὸ μεράκιον).

⁽⁵³⁾ Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 13.5 ὃς περὶ τῶν ὅλων πολέμων τριακοσίας ἐξήκοντα περιήγετο παλλακάς.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Chrysostom, *Hom.* xxxvi in *Gen.* 2 (PG 53; 334): Ἐὰν οὖν ἰδωσί σε, καὶ γνώσιν ὅτι καθάπερ γυναῖκα περιάγω σε ...

Chrysostom's casual use of the verb for Abraham's relationship to Sarah, it is not difficult to believe that the women were wives. The conclusion cannot be forced, however, given the diversity of uses of the verb. What the verb does imply is that the relationship of the apostles and the women was very close — creating the educational opportunity that Chrysostom noticed.

3. *Chrysostom and περιόγειν — The Women as Learners*

Chrysostom supplies an additional building block for the argument of this essay. In a homily on Matthew he describes the full inclusion of women in the Christian community by quoting Gal 3,28. He then mentions the upper room where both men and women were gathered together in an assembly that was of heaven (Acts 1,13-14; 2). After a reference to the purple goods dealer, he quotes Lydia's words in Acts 16,15 and adds: "Listen to the women who went around with the apostles, receiving male thought, Priscilla, Persis, and the others" ⁽⁵⁵⁾. His choice of words is unfortunate (male!), but the principle seems nearly undeniable, unless the apostles kept the women away from them when they preached or taught, and I am aware of no such absurd claim in the history of interpretation of this text. Even some interpreters who do not see a role in the mission for the women have been willing to claim that they had a thirst for the apostolic teaching ⁽⁵⁶⁾. Although it is fictional, the story of Thecla is an interesting comparison. After hearing Paul's teaching she ends up teaching the word herself as Paul had commanded her to do ⁽⁵⁷⁾. The women of 9,5 would have heard, on frequent occasions, the apostles' proclamation and teaching.

IX. Greek Women: The Relevance of Hipparchia and Other Philosophers

A famous example from the history of Greek philosophy confirms the principle that hearing a teacher can give one the ability to teach

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Chrysostom, *Hom. lxxiii in Matt. 3* (PG 58; 677): 'Ακούσατε τῶν γυναικῶν, αἱ περιήγον μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἀνδρεῖον ἀναλαβοῦσαι φρόνημα, τῆς Πρισκήλλης, τῆς Περσίδος, τῶν ἄλλων·

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Cf the section on Instruction and LAPIDE, *Commentaria*, 263 (disciples of a teacher who also provided material support) dependent upon Ambrosiaster, *Ad Cor. prima* 9,5 (CSEL 71/2, 98,7-11 VOGELS).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ *ActPI* 7, 41-42 (240-41; 267-68 LIPSIVS/BONNET).

others. The education of a convert to Cynic philosophy proceeded in this fashion. Hipparchia (III B.C.E.) “fell in love with the teachings and life of Crates” (ἤρα τοῦ Κράτητος καὶ τῶν λόγων καὶ τοῦ βίου)⁽⁵⁸⁾. She refutes the moral philosophy of an atheist who then mocks her by quoting a famous tragedian and by asking if she is the one who has left shuttles and loom. An epigram from the *Greek Anthology* describes her as one who did not want the “works of deep-robed women”. Instead, “My wallet is my staff’s traveling companion, and the double cloak that goes with them, the cover for my bed on the ground”⁽⁵⁹⁾. She must have done some “mission” traveling herself⁽⁶⁰⁾. Centuries later (II-III C.E.) in Mysia there is an inscription that mentions a philosopher named Magnilla, the daughter of a philosopher and wife of a philosopher (Μάγνιλλα[ν φιλό]/σοφον Μάγν[ου] / φιλοσόφου θυ[γα]/τέρα, Μηνίο[ν φιλο]/σ[όφ]ου γυ[ναῖκα]⁽⁶¹⁾). Surely she learned from her father and possibly from her husband, or possibly she taught him. These intimate relationships and the learning and teaching environment that they could imply for certain women call for a reevaluation of Clement’s tradition.

X. Clement, Ancient Households, and the Mission to Women

Carolyn Osiek and David Balch, in an illuminating discussion of Clement’s treatment of 1 Cor 9,5 (the apostles taking wives with them as sisters), argue that his view of the structure of a household does not reflect the situation of Asia Minor and Greece in Paul’s own day but

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Cf Diog. Laert. 6.96-8 and M. R. LEFKOWITZ and M. B. FANT, *Women’s Life in Greece & Rome. A Source Book in Translation* (Baltimore 1992) § 217. Crates tries to discourage marriage by showing her his old body, but she insists.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ *Anth. Graec.* 7.413 οὐλὰς δὲ σκίπωνι συνέμπορος ἅ τε συνωδὸς/δίπλαξ καὶ κοίτας βλήμα χαμαιλεχέος. Trans. from LEFKOWITZ – FANT, *Women’s Life*, § 218. On Hipparchia see J.M. GARCIA GONZALEZ and P. P. FUENTES GONZALEZ, “Hipparchia (H 138)”, *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* (ed. R. GOULET) (Paris 2000) III, 742-750.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Two other pagan couples taught, but were not “missionaries”: Hypatia (IV-V C.E.) and Isidorus in Alexandria (Suidas, *Lexicon* Y § 166 [644,1-647,5 ADLER — the Suda believes she remained a virgin]), and Sosipatra (IV C.E.) and Eustathius in Asia (Eunapius, *Vita Soph.* 6.6.5-9.15 [28,4-35,24 GIANGRANDE]). Sosipatra had three children.

⁽⁶¹⁾ *IMT (IK Miletupolis)* LApollon/Milet § 2365 in the PHI CD ROM #7 Greek Documentary Texts (Packard Humanities Institute 1991-1996). Cf <http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/>. For bibliography and a translation see LEFKOWITZ – FANT, *Women’s Life* § 221.

that of the late second century in Alexandria. Clement's picture also reflects Vitruvius' distinction between the structure of Greek and Roman houses⁽⁶²⁾. The situation may not be so clear. Vitruvius wrote in I B.C.E., so the distinction, at least for aristocratic Greeks who could afford such large homes, might be of some relevance for Paul's time⁽⁶³⁾. Cornelius Nepos (also of I B.C.E.) writes that

No Roman would hesitate to take his wife to a dinner party, or to allow the mother of his family to occupy the first rooms in his house and to walk about in public. The custom in Greece is completely different; a woman cannot appear at a party unless it is among her relatives; she can only sit in the interior of the house, which is called the women's quarters (*gynaecoonitis*); this no male can enter unless he is a close relation⁽⁶⁴⁾.

The wide-ranging use of *gynaecoonitis* (women's quarters) in Greek literature of all periods is another argument against limiting Clement's vision to "second century Alexandria"⁽⁶⁵⁾. Philo uses it of Gaius' survey of homes in Rome⁽⁶⁶⁾. Plutarch places Caesar's wife in the women's quarters⁽⁶⁷⁾. In that text a scandal occurred when a young man was found there with bad intentions.

⁽⁶²⁾ OSIEK – BALCH, *Families in the New Testament World*, 170, 6-10, 27-34 with reference to Vitruvius, *De arch.* 6.7.1-5 and Clement, *Str.* 3.6.52. MACDONALD, "Was Celsus Right?", 168) refers to the marriages in Clement (3.6.53.3) as "spiritual" and points out that Clement's view that women only ministered to other women was an acceptable division of labor for the end of the second century (cp. *ConstAp* 3.16.1-2 [SC 329; 154,1-156,13 METZGER] for a similar ministry of deaconesses).

⁽⁶³⁾ R. ALSTON, *The City in Roman and Byzantine Egypt* (London – New York 2002) 82, however, includes four plans of Greek houses (from various periods), and none of them conforms to Vitruvius' idealized picture, nor does the plan of the house from Kellis illustrated in *Ibid.*, 106. He notes that "there was no 'standard Greek house plan'" (*Ibid.*, 81).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Cornelius Nepos, *Vitae praef.* 6. *quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in conuiuium? aut cuius non mater familias primum locum tenet aedium atque in celebritate uersatur? quod multo fit aliter in Graecia. nam neque in conuiuium adhibetur nisi propinquorum, neque sedet nisi in interiore parte aedium, quae gynaecoonitis appellatur, quo nemo accedit nisi propinqua cognatione coniunctus.* Trans. of LEFKOWITZ – FANT, *Women's Life*, § 209.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ 247 uses of the γυναικωνίτις in the TLG. It also appears in inscriptions from Delos (e.g. IG XI/2 § 204.32 [268 B.C.E.], a lease of the women's quarters of a house owned by a temple). Another synonym is ἡ γυναικεία (*gynaceum* in Latin).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Philo, *Leg.* 358.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Plutarch, *Caes.* 9.3.

W. den Boer has done one of the most perceptive analyses of the use of this word (*gynaecoonitis*) in antiquity with relation to the famous text in Origen, *Contra Celsum* 3.55 where the term is apparently used with the meaning “wool-working shop”⁽⁶⁸⁾. The text of Celsus has been crucial in MacDonald’s recent investigation of the role of women in Christian mission⁽⁶⁹⁾. Celsus mentions the evangelistic efforts of woolworkers, cobblers and fullers (ἐπιουργοὺς καὶ σκυτοτόμους καὶ κναφεῖς) and other uneducated crude individuals who in their own homes will say nothing in front of their older and more intelligent masters. Whenever they, however, “get ahold” (λάβωνται) of children and certain unintelligent women (γυναικῶν τινῶν σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀνοήτων) they try to teach them how to live. If they see the children’s teacher or the father approaching, they retreat to the wool-working shop, the cobbler’s shop, and the fuller’s shop (τὴν γυναικωνῖτιν ἢ τὸ σκυτεῖον ἢ τὸ κναφεῖον) along with the women and children.

Although Celsus is probably thinking of the evangelistic efforts of men, lower class women (especially freedwomen) worked in numerous trades, including those that he mentioned⁽⁷⁰⁾. There were many shops where women worked, and some houses in many parts of the Mediterranean world included shops⁽⁷¹⁾. In late Hellenistic Delos

(⁶⁸) W. DEN BOER, “Gynaecoonitis. A Centre of Christian Propaganda”, *VigChr* 4 (1950) 61-64. For the text see Origen, *C. Cels.* 3.55 (SVigChr 54; 196,16-197,7 MARCOVICH).

(⁶⁹) MACDONALD, “Was Celsus Right?”, 157-184. For Celsus’ belief that Christians can only persuade the foolish see the discussion in J.G. COOK, *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco Roman Paganism* (Tübingen 2000) 82-88.

(⁷⁰) LEFKOWITZ – FANT, *Women’s Life*, §322-37 list many papyri and inscriptions. The trades include woolworker (§ 329). Cf IG II/2 § 1554 Face A Col. I.32 Φιλίστη ταλασι (Philiste “the spinner” in a manumission inscription). On the text see D.M. LEWIS, “Attic Manumissions”, *Hesperia* 28 (1959) 208-238. One could add the cobbler from IG III App. § 12 (Θέα ἡ σκυτοτόμος) or the fuller in P.Cair. Mich. 359 32.1393 (γνάφισ[σ]α). For other women who were fullers cf LSJ s.v. κνάφισσα). Vitruvius 6.7.2 describes the *gynaecoonitis* as the place where the *materfamilias* (mother of the family) sits with the women who work in wool (*in quibus matres familiarum cum lanificis habent sessionem*).

(⁷¹) For Egypt cf R. ALSTON, *The City*, 62 (an *exedra* in a house in Egypt that might have been for a shop), 275 (many Oxyrynchus texts listing merchants). In Greece some houses also served as places of business. N. CAHILL, “Household Industry in Greece and Anatolia”, *Ancient Greek Houses and Households. Chronological, Regional and Social Diversity* (eds. B.A. AULT – L.C. NEVETT) (Philadelphia, PA 2005) 54-66 investigates (Classical era) domestic production at

there are hundreds of small structures called *tabernae* by archaeologists (possibly used for shops, workshops, production of food, storerooms or taverns), which have separate entrances from the street⁽⁷²⁾. They include housing (with its own entrance) on a mezzanine or upper level. Ancient Greek workshops such as those in Athens or Delos might have employed "extended family, hired labor or slaves"⁽⁷³⁾. Literary evidence from classical Greece indicates the presence of slaves in such workshops attached to houses⁽⁷⁴⁾. Presumably the apostles or their wives (if they were married) would have been able to easily do mission work in those contexts. Celsus confirms that later Christians indeed did head to the shops and workplaces for mission.

With regard to the *gynaeconitis*, one can only appeal to historical probability, but Clement's tradition and the evidence from Vitruvius, Nepos, and other texts mentioned above are good support for the thesis that the women of 9,5 would have had certain mission opportunities denied the apostles themselves. This could include the areas in some homes construed as "off limits" to males. The existence of such areas is not dependent on the idealized house plan of Vitruvius.

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* *

The force of the various steps in the argument outlined above strengthens the claim that the "sister women" contributed to the early Christian mission. Since Cephas/Peter was married and given the usage of "lead around", many of the women were probably wives, but not necessarily all. Some of them might have chosen primarily to give material or domestic support to the apostles. All of the women, however, became well trained in apostolic teaching and, if they so

Olynthos (54: weaving) and Sardis (VI C.E.). B. TSAKIRGIS, "Living and Working Around the Athenian Agora: A Preliminary Case Study of Three Houses", *Ancient Greek Houses*, 67-82 discusses three houses next to the Athenian Agora where a smith, sculptor, and cobbler lived and worked (Classical era).

(72) M. TRÜMPER, "Modest Housing in Late Hellenistic Delos", *Ancient Greek Houses*, 119-139, esp. 120-122.

(73) CAHILL, "Household Industry," 59-60.

(74) TSAKIRGIS, "Living and Working", 69 with reference to Demosthenes 27.19, 26 (*In Aphob. I*) and Lysias 12.19 (*In Eratosth.*; 120 slaves who made shields).

chose, could have taught other people in the workplaces, “women’s quarters”, or other settings in the Mediterranean world.

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SUMMARY

The women of the apostles in 1 Cor 9,5 have posed a riddle in the history of interpretation. With few exceptions commentators over the last one hundred years have identified them as wives and dismissed the text in a few lines. Recent research on the role of women in early Christian mission has brought a fresh assessment, concluding that the women were missionary assistants to the apostles. This essay develops an extended argument to solidify the thesis using the history of interpretation, the nature of missionary partnerships in the Pauline epistles, semantics, some important parallels from the Greco-Roman world, and the nature of ancient households.

ANIMADVERSIONES

The Defilement and Desecration of the Temple in Ezekiel*

The polarities of holy (קדש) and desecration (חל), and pure (טהור) and defilement (טמא), are overarching themes in Ezekiel ('). Desecration signifies the contrast to holiness, infringing upon the sacred domain and divesting it of its holy status. Hence, whenever we find the concept of holiness mentioned in Ezekiel, we find as well the converse notion – the desecration of holiness, the violation of this status. Alongside this contrast we also find the contrast between pure and defilement, as Ezekiel criticizes the people for defiling that which was to remain pure (').

Although Ezekiel generally adheres to the biblical distinction between defilement (טמאה) – as of the people and the land – and desecration (חילול) – as of the Sabbath and of God's name (') – he is unique in ascribing to the Temple both concepts of defilement (טמאה) and desecration (חילול) ('). Previous studies on the connotations of the roots טמא (defile) and חלל (desecrate) treat them as interchangeable terms. This conclusion was reached mainly due to the problematic combination of these two expressions in the phrase טמא את שם קדשי “defile My holy name” (Ezek 43,7-8), a construction that appears only in Ezekiel.

The ascription of “defilement” to the “holy” name appears paradoxical, as the “holy” is desecrated, not “defiled” ('). Thus, for example, Meir Paran concludes that “the roots חלל/טמא can be interchangeable, as one might deduce from a comparison between למען חלל את שם קדשי (so as to desecrate my holy

(*) The Anchor Bible edition was used for biblical citations, with the exception of Ezek 38-48, for which the NJPS edition was used.

(') We address here only the “moral” purity and impurity which appears throughout Ezekiel. Ezekiel makes reference to the “ritual” statuses of purity and impurity in only one context (44,25-26), amidst the discussion of the laws pertaining to the priests.

(') Desecration of the holy is generally accomplished, among other ways, by defiling it, though there can be something which is not holy but yet is pure. For more on the relationship between sacred/desecrated and pure/defiled, see J. MILGROM, “The Changing Concept of Holiness”, *Reading Leviticus* (ed. J.F.A. SAWYER) (JSOTSS 227; London 1996) 71-72; B. SCHWARTZ, *Torat Ha-kedusha* (Jerusalem 1999) 254.

(') The people and the land are always described in Ezekiel as “impure” (לֹא טָהוֹר), whereas the Sabbath and God's name are always described as “desecrated” (חָלָל), with the single exception of Ezek 43,7-8, in which the divine name is “defiled” (טָמָא).

(') D.F. O'KENNEDY, “חָלָל”, *Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* (ed. W.A. VAN GEMEREN) (Grand Rapids, MI 1997) 145-150.

(') See, for example, J. MILGROM, “The Changing Concept of Holiness”, 65-83. On p. 65, Milgrom assumes that God is holy, and on p. 72 he notes that the holy cannot come into contact with the impure. This difficulty led J. GAMMIE, *Holiness in Israel* (Minneapolis, MN 1989) 55-56, as well as others, to view these verses as a later addition by Ezekiel's followers.

name; Amos 2,7) and קדשִׁי וּמִשְׁכָּנִי אֶת שְׁמִי (they would defile My holy name; Ezek 43,8)⁽⁶⁾.

Jacob Milgrom takes a different approach, suggesting that the connotations of these two terms are not precisely identical. In his view, “defilement” and “desecration” can be used interchangeably with respect to physical entities, such as the Temple, but not regarding non-physical entities such as time, to which only the status of חֲלָל, desecration, can be ascribed. Thus, for example, the Sabbath is often spoken of as “desecrated”, but never as “defiled.” This explains the prevailing association between God’s name and the root חֲלָל. As שִׁמָּא always relates to physical objects, the Priestly writers avoided its application to God in order not to objectify the divine being⁽⁷⁾. In Ezekiel, however, according to Milgrom, these two concepts are used imprecisely, or, alternatively, Ezek 43,7-8’s singular use of שִׁמָּא in reference to God’s name should be seen as an aberration.

Rimmon Kasher advances another, more compelling understanding of this difficult phrase, suggesting that since Ezekiel has a boldly anthropomorphic conception of God, he is objectified in Ezekiel’s prophecies. In such a conception, the divine dwelling place assumes supreme sanctity, and physical proximity to the divine dwelling place defiles God’s name, which effectively amounts to the defilement of God himself⁽⁸⁾.

The present discussion takes issue with the basic assumption that חֲלָל and שִׁמָּא are interchangeable, and argues that even in Ezekiel, they refer to two distinct notions. A careful examination of Ezekiel’s three references to the Temple’s “defilement” (5,11; 9,7; 23,38) as compared with the five instances where he speaks of its “desecration” (7,21-22; 23,39; 24,21; 25,3; 44,7) reveals a clear distinction between the two concepts, and demonstrates that Ezekiel indeed chose his words with precision.

I. “Defilement” (שִׁמָּא)

We begin by examining Ezekiel’s descriptions of the Temple’s “defilement” and its underlying causes.

1. Ezek 5,11

In Ezek 5,11, the prophet attributes the defilement of the Temple to שִׁקּוּצִים (“loathsome things”) and תועבות (“abominable things”): “Because you defiled my sanctuary with all your loathsome (שִׁקּוּצֵיךָ)⁽⁹⁾ and abominable things (תועבותֶיךָ)⁽¹⁰⁾...”.

⁽⁶⁾ M. PARAN, *Forms of the Priestly Style in the Pentateuch*. Patterns, Linguistic Usages, Syntactic Structures (Jerusalem 1989) 110, n. 55 (Heb.).

⁽⁷⁾ J. MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22* (AB; New York 2000) 1735. Milgrom includes both P and H in the Priestly Source.

⁽⁸⁾ R. KASHER, “Anthropomorphism, Holiness and Cult: A New Look at Ezekiel 40–48”, *ZAW* 110 (1998) 192–208.

⁽⁹⁾ The phrase שִׁקּוּצֵיךָ is missing from the LXX.

⁽¹⁰⁾ The wording of this verse makes it difficult to determine if the involvement of the Israelites in idolatry itself defiles the Temple, or whether Ezekiel refers specifically to idolatrous practices performed within the Temple precincts, similar to that described at

The precise meaning of the term שִׁקּוּצִים has been discussed by several scholars, including Milgrom⁽¹¹⁾, who concluded that in P (Lev 11,10-42; 7,21) this term has a ritual meaning — forbidden foods; in H (Lev 11,44; 20,25) it has a metaphorical meaning of abhorrence and revulsion; and in Deut 7,26 and 29,16 it means idolatry (which is also, in his view, the meaning preserved in the Second Temple period)⁽¹²⁾. Ezekiel, on eight occasions, employs this term in clear reference to idolatry (5,11; 7,20; 11,18.21; 20,7.8.30; 37,23), thus indicating that in Ezekiel, as in Deuteronomy, שִׁקּוּצִים serves to denote idolatry⁽¹³⁾. Although in the Priestly Sources שִׁקּוּץ does not have the capacity to “defile”, once it became a pejorative name for idolatry, which indeed causes “defilement,” this term can then be associated with defilement.

“Abominations” constitute a second Temple-defiling factor for Ezekiel. The term תועבה appears 117 times in the Bible, and 45 of these occurrences are found in Ezekiel⁽¹⁴⁾. It is not surprising that Ezekiel, who, in conveying his message to the people, uses direct, crude means of expression in an attempt to alarm his audience, employs this term more frequently than any other prophet, as well as the unique constructions תועבות רעות (evil abominations; 6,11; 8, 9), תועבות גדולות (great abominations; 8, 13.15), and תועבות רעות (the images of their abominable things; 7,2). In particular, the construction תועבותם (images of their abominable things) is used nowhere else in the Bible⁽¹⁵⁾. These distinctive phrases, which impress upon Ezekiel’s audience the radical nature of the acts they committed, appear mainly in the context of the

length in chapter 8. These possibilities are grounded in the question of how impurity is passed on to the Temple in general, and in Ezekiel in particular.

⁽¹¹⁾ J. MILGROM, “Two Priestly Terms *šeqes* and *tāmē*”, *Tarbiz* 60 (1991) 423–428 (Heb.); D.N. FREEDMAN – A.J. WELCH, “שִׁקּוּץ”, *TDOT* XV, 465–469.

⁽¹²⁾ MILGROM, “Priestly Terms”, 424, distinguishes between the terms שִׁקּוּץ, שִׁרְיָן, and כִּמְאָה. The uniqueness of שִׁקּוּץ is that although it is forbidden for consumption, it does not defile by contact. It itself is pure, and, furthermore, since it originates in the ocean waters are not susceptible to impurity, it does not transmit impurity. There is no punishment for the consumption of a שִׁקּוּץ, whether intentional or accidental. Milgrom’s definition is consistent with the many instances of the root שִׁקּוּץ in the Priestly literature, but Lev 20,25 indicates that שִׁקּוּצִים do, in fact, transmit impurity: “You shall not defile your throats (תִּשְׁקֹצוּ אֶת נִפְשֵׁיכֶם) (שִׁקּוּץ) with a quadruped or bird or anything with which the ground teems, which I have set apart for you to treat as impure (לִכְמָא).” Ezekiel also treats the שִׁקּוּץ as a conveyor of defilement: “They shall no more be polluted by their idols and by their loathsome things (תִּשְׁקֹצוּהֶם) (שִׁקּוּצִים) עַד בְּגִלּוּלֵיהֶם: וְכָל עֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם” (37,23).

⁽¹³⁾ Idolatry can be understood broadly as by J. MILGROM, “The Nature and Extent of Idolatry in Seventh-Eighth Century Judah”, *HUCA* 69 (1998) 1–13. Milgrom counts eighty-two instances in which Ezekiel protests against idolatry among the Israelites (p. 1). The present discussion treats only those verses that reveal the nature of these practices, as opposed to general censure of idolatry.

⁽¹⁴⁾ I will not address the etymology of this term, which is a matter of scholarly debate. For a recent consideration, see B.J. SCHWARTZ, *The Holiness Legislation* (Jerusalem 1999) 219 (Heb.) and the notes there; H. -D. PREUSS, “ברחשׁ”, *TDOT* XV, 591–602 and bibliography, 591.

⁽¹⁵⁾ The word צִלְמִי appears twice more in Ezekiel, in both cases as part of a construction associated with harlotry: זָכָר צִלְמִי (phallic images; 16,17) and צִלְמֵי כַשְׁדִּים (figures of Chaldeans; 23,14). In two other instances, Ezek 8,3 and 5, we find the term כִּמְלָא which appears a total of five times in Scripture (Deut 4,16; 2 Chr 33,7.15), in both cases as part of the construction כִּמְלָא הַקִּמָּא. There seems to be no clear-cut distinction between the two terms; indeed, the LXX uses the same word — στήλη [τοῦ κτωμένου] — for both.

idolatrous practices performed in the Temple, portrayed by Ezekiel as the pinnacle of “abomination”.

Many studies have been devoted to establishing the precise meaning of “abomination” in the Bible⁽¹⁶⁾. I submit that abomination, as employed by Ezekiel, serves as a broad, inclusive term used in reference to something repugnant and despicable in either the religious-cultic or social-moral sphere, and that any attempt to define this term simply distorts its meaning. The sins and immoral acts described as abominations in Ezekiel cannot be enumerated or defined with any degree of specificity, and thus this term must include a wide variety of sins⁽¹⁷⁾. It not only encompasses the sins enumerated in all the Pentateuchal codes, but it also extends to the intolerable acts perpetrated by the people that eventually brought about the Temple’s destruction and the nation’s exile. Ezekiel 22 alone lists twelve sins under the rubric of “abominations”: וְהוֹדַעְתָּהּ אֵת כָּל חַטֹּאתֶיהָ (then declare to her all her abominations!)(¹⁸). Leviticus 24–30 instructs that abominations pollute the land and cause the people to be exiled, and to this Ezekiel adds that they defile the Temple.

2. Ezek 9,7

In chapter 9, Ezekiel points to a third factor that causes the Temple’s “defilement” (in addition to שִׁקְעִים and חַטֹּאת), namely, murderous acts committed in the Temple courtyard: “And YHWH said to him...’slay and destroy old men, youths and maidens, little ones and women...and start from my sanctuary!’ So they started with the elders who were before the house. He said to them, ‘Defile (נִמְאָה) the house and fill its courts with corpses; go forth!’ So they went forth and killed in the city” (Ezek 9,4-7)(¹⁹).

This passage describes the execution of people in the Temple courtyard,

⁽¹⁶⁾ See E. GERSTENBERGER, s.v. “to abhor”, *TLOT* III, 1428-1431; J. MILGROM, “Toeva”, *Encyclopedia Biblica*, VIII, 466-468 (Heb.); W.W. HALLO, “Biblical Abominations and Sumerian Taboos”, *JQR* 76 (1985) 21-40; J. KLEIN – Y. SEFATI, “The Concept of ‘Abomination’ in Mesopotamian Literature and the Bible”, *Beer-Sheva* 3 (1988) 131-148 (esp. n. 60) (Heb.); and W.H. PICKETT, *The Meaning and Function of ‘T’B/TO’EVAH’ in the Hebrew Bible*, Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Union College, 1985, where Pickett summarizes the state of research until 1985 (esp. 1-49, 286-300). Two studies are devoted to consideration of this term: P. HUMBERT, “Le substantif *to’ēbā* et le verbe *t’b* dans l’Ancien Testament”, *ZAW* 72 (1960) 227-231; and Pickett’s above-cited doctoral dissertation, 233-270.

⁽¹⁷⁾ In the other biblical books, it is possible to distinguish between the different contexts in which this term appears. Paran, *Priestly Style*, 346-347, differentiates between the Priestly Code (which he claims includes all the Priestly literature) and Deuteronomy, noting חֶטֶא’s limited framework in the Priestly Code as opposed to its more varied contexts in Deuteronomy. For a recent comparison of the use of חַטֹּאת in Deuteronomy and the Holiness Code, see E. REGEV, “Moshe Weinfeld Reconsidered: Towards the Typology of Holiness in the Priestly Schools and Deuteronomy”, *Shnaton. An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 14 (2004) 51-74, esp. 62-63 (Heb.); and E. REGEV, “Priestly Dynamic Holiness and Deuteronomical Static Holiness”, *VT* 51 (2001) 243-261, esp. 248-250.

⁽¹⁸⁾ See PICKETT, ‘T’B/TO’EVAH, 237, and his conclusions, 279-301.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Ezek 9,6-7 makes consistent use of the root חָלַל, וַיַּחֲלֵהוּ, וַיִּמְאָקֵשׁ חָלָל: חָלַל. Even if the damage caused to the Temple can be described as desecration, nonetheless, Ezekiel deliberately chose to use the combination חָלַל אֵת הַבַּיִת (defiled the house).

as commanded by God himself. Whereas all other Temple-defiling acts involve sins committed against the divine will, here defilement results from a divine command to commit murder in the Temple courtyard. The obvious question arises as to why and how God could require an act that defiles the Temple, whose sanctity he so strictly demands be maintained.

One possible answer is that the Temple has already been defiled by the people's acts, and the divine presence has thus already left⁽²⁰⁾. Alternatively, this execution might serve as a symbolic act, aimed at heralding the Temple's impending destruction. Indeed, chapter 8 begins by relating that these events occurred "in the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth of the month", and they therefore preceded the actual destruction, which occurred several years later, as chronicled in chapter 33: "It was in the twelfth year, in the tenth month, on the fifth of the month, of our exile, that a survivor from Jerusalem came to me, saying, 'The city has fallen'" (v. 21)⁽²¹⁾. This act should thus be seen merely as symbolic foreshadowing. Either way, God's active defilement of the Temple demonstrates that it is no longer immune, as the divine presence has left it. Indeed, these chapters of Ezekiel describe the departure of the divine presence from the Temple.

In any event, it emerges clearly from these verses that murderous acts in the Temple's courtyard cause its defilement.

3. Ezek 23,38–39

In these verses, the Temple's defilement occurs as a result of the sacrificial offering of children⁽²²⁾: "This, too (עוד זאת) (23), they did to me: they defiled (טמאו) my sanctuary on that day and they desecrated (חללו) my Sabbaths; namely, when they slaughtered their children to their idols they entered my sanctuary on that day (24) to desecrate it (לחללו). See, that is what they did inside my house!" (25) This type of Temple-defiling sin appears

⁽²⁰⁾ See GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1–20* (AB; New York 1983) 177, where he compares this act to 2 Kgs 11,15 where, in order to preserve the purity of the Temple, Athaliah is removed from the sacred precinct prior to her execution.

⁽²¹⁾ The underlying conception here is that the prophecies found in Ezekiel 1–24 were delivered following the divine decision to destroy the Temple; consequently, they constitute an announcement, and not a warning.

⁽²²⁾ This differs from passing children through fire to fetishes, which, according to Ezek 20,31, defiles the nation at large, and not merely the Temple.

⁽²³⁾ The construction עוד זאת appears in the Bible four times, three times in Ezekiel (20,27; 23,38; 36,37) and once in 2 Sam (7,19). In all these cases, the phrase denotes an addition to the foregoing.

⁽²⁴⁾ It should be noted that the phrase ביום ההוא is missing from the LXX in vv. 38 and 39, whereas all other instances of this phrase in Ezekiel appear there, as well. This can be explained by the redactor's desire (MT) to emphasize that the idolatry and defilement of the Temple took place on that very day. This phrase, which appears fifteen times in Ezekiel, generally denotes that the events in question took place during a certain period, and more rarely, on that very day.

⁽²⁵⁾ Ezek 23,37–39 addresses the manner in which the Temple becomes defiled. In v. 38, this status results from one's arrival in the Temple after the sacrificial offering of his children, desecration of the Sabbath, or other unspecified acts that defile the sanctuary. The expression ביום ההוא appears in v. 39, as well, but as opposed to the previous verse, here the temporal component is explicit: ובשחם את בניהם לגלוליהם. Quite possibly, then, in this verse idol worship and the arrival in the Temple take place on the same day, and

already in the Priestly Sources (Lev 18,21-30 and 20,33), which form the basis for Ezekiel's viewing this act as a cause of defilement⁽²⁶⁾. Here in Ezekiel, the prophet combines the defilement of the Temple with its desecration, thereby emphasizing the severity of the people's wrongdoing and thus justifying the impending destruction of the Temple.

Thus, Ezekiel perceives the defilement of the Temple as the result of loathsome (שִׁקוּצִים) and abominable things (תועבות), murderous acts in the Temple courtyards, and the sacrifice of children to idolatry both within and outside the Temple.

II. "Desecration" (חילול)

Ezekiel makes reference to the "desecration" of the Temple in five contexts: chapters 7, 23, 24, 25, and 44⁽²⁷⁾. On one level, Ezekiel's description of this phenomenon closely resembles that of the Temple's defilement, in that it results from various forms of idolatry ("images of their abominable, loathsome things" — 7,20) and the sacrificial offering of children (23,39). However, in the context of the Temple's desecration, as opposed to its defilement, Ezekiel emphasizes that this is effectuated through the arrival of foreigners in the Temple. Even if the cause of the desecration is the people's sins, the means by which this occurs is the presence of foreigners. Thus, for example, Ezekiel 7,20-22 states, "Their beautiful adornment in which they took pride — out of it they made images of their abominable, loathsome things; therefore I will turn it into an unclean thing for them⁽²⁸⁾. I will hand it over to strangers as booty, to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they shall desecrate it (וַחֲלִלוּהָ). I will avert my face from them and they shall desecrate (וַחֲלִלוּ) my treasure; violent men shall enter it and desecrate it"⁽²⁹⁾. However, as opposed to the verses describing the Temple's defilement, which depict the Israelites' misconduct as both the cause and the means to this end, Ezekiel here attributes the desecration of the Temple to the presence of aliens. The

it is this proximity between the idolatry and entry into the Temple that causes the desecration.

⁽²⁶⁾ MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1384–1385 notes that the prevailing view in the eighth century BCE was that only Molech worship defiled the Temple, whereas in the seventh century, Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied that idolatry in all its forms defiles the sinners, the Temple, and the land.

⁽²⁷⁾ It should be noted that some of these verses combine the desecration of the Temple with that of Jerusalem.

⁽²⁸⁾ The term נדה (unclean thing) generally refers to a menstruating woman. Here and in Ezek 36,17 it serves as a description of the people's moral sins. The only other instance of this usage of the word is in Ezra 9,11. See C.E. FONROBERT, *Menstrual Purity* (Stanford 2000) 18, n. 12.

⁽²⁹⁾ It is also possible that Ezek 7,24-25 makes specific reference to the sins that caused the people's desecration: "Forge the chain! For the land is full of bloody judgments and the city is full of lawlessness. So I will bring the worst of the nations and they shall take possession of their houses; And I will put an end to the pride of the fierce, and their sanctuaries shall be desecrated (וַתִּחַלְלוּ מִקְדָּשֵׁיהֶם)." The punctuation of the word מִקְדָּשֵׁיהֶם evidently refers to the people, and it means that those in charge of preserving the sanctity of Temple — the people — have been desecrated, even though contextually the subject of the sentence is the Temple. See GREENBERG, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 155.

consequence of the people's sins detailed in v. 20 is the Temple's falling into the hands of foreigners, which directly causes its desecration⁽³⁰⁾.

In chapter 44, Ezekiel again imputes the desecration of the Temple to the presence of foreigners: "admitting aliens, uncircumcised of spirit and uncircumcised of flesh, to be in my sanctuary and profane (לְחַלְלֵהוּ) my very Temple" (v. 7). Here, however, unlike in chapter 7, the foreigners are brought by the Israelites themselves, rather than being sent by God. This invitation to foreigners to come to the Temple prompted God's command, "Let no alien, uncircumcised in spirit and flesh, enter my sanctuary — no alien among the people of Israel" (v. 9). In this prophecy, it is the people of Israel — not God — who brought the aliens to the Temple, thereby desecrating it, and God instructs that this be avoided in the future Temple.

The prophecy regarding the impending desecration of the Temple in Ezek 24,21 does not specify the sins from which this results or how the Temple will be desecrated⁽³¹⁾. Similarly, in Ezek 25,3 the prophet notes the joyous reaction of the Ammonites to the Temple's desecration, without identifying its cause⁽³²⁾.

Apart from the desecration of the Temple by foreigners, Ezekiel 23 cites yet another grievous act that desecrated the Temple: "Namely, when they slaughtered their children to their idols they entered my sanctuary on that day to desecrate it (לְחַלְלֵהוּ). See, that is what they did inside my house!" (v. 39). The slaughtering of children to fetishes in the Temple precincts — God's house — leads to its immediate desecration⁽³³⁾. The desecration results not only from the introduction of foreigners, but also from the arrival of the Israelites themselves for the purpose of slaughtering children to fetishes.

This brief consideration shows that Ezekiel distinguishes between the

⁽³⁰⁾ The subject of *וַיִּפְּנֵה אֶת צַדִּיק* in this verse is ambiguous: the first part of the verse, *וַיִּפְּנֵה אֶת צַדִּיק*, can be understood as referring to the people of Israel, from whom God turns his face after their sins desecrated the Temple, and that the aliens are the subject only of the verse's second clause (*וַיִּפְּנֵה אֶת צַדִּיק*). In any event, the actual desecration of the Temple is effected by the foreigners who, by divine will, come to the Temple and desecrate it by their very presence.

⁽³¹⁾ See Rabbi David Kimhi's commentary to 24,21, in *Mikraot Gedolot Haketer* (ed. M. COHEN) (Jerusalem 2000) (translation cited from AB 22, 153): "Hence it will become unclean, desecrated by invaders." Perhaps the foreigners desecrate the Temple by their very arrival, without any further action on their part.

⁽³²⁾ It is possible that the desecration results simply from the fact that the foreigners enter the Temple, and not merely from the destruction they perpetrate there.

⁽³³⁾ The sins that caused the Temple's defilement and desecration are most clearly delineated in chapter 8, which addresses the various types of idolatry witnessed by Ezekiel in the Temple courts. It clearly emerges from the text that this idolatry, carried out in the sacred precinct, has an adverse effect on its sanctity. This explains the emphasis on the site of this worship (the great abominations that the house of Israel are committing her; *וַתִּעֲבֹד בְּדִלּוֹת אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹשִׂים פָּה*), the result of which is "removing themselves from my sanctuary" (*לְרַחֲקָה מֵעַל מִקְדָּשִׁי*). No mention is made in this chapter of the defilement or desecration of the Temple (its defilement takes place through God's agents in chapter 9), but we may infer that these acts indirectly cause the defilement of the from the consequent departure of the divine presence: "Now the Majesty of the God of Israel had moved off the cherub, on which it had been, to the threshold of the house" (9,3). The departure of the divine presence from the Temple is what allows God to command the six people, including the man clothed in linen, to pass through Jerusalem killing everyone they chance upon, thereby defiling the Temple through corpse impurity (Ezek 9, 3-7).

factors that defile the Temple, and those that desecrate it. Both phenomena relate to the Israelites' involvement in various types of idol worship, but whereas the Temple's defilement results directly from the people's involvement with idol worship, its desecration is generally caused by the entry of aliens into its precincts, sometimes as divine envoys, and sometimes with the approval of the people, who did not have the sense to exclude them. On other occasions, it is the arrival of Israelite worshipers in the Temple after slaughtering their children that effectuates the Temple's desecration.

III. "Defilement" in the Priestly Sources

An evaluation of the usage of the term "defilement" and "desecration" in the Priestly Sources further demonstrates that these terms are not randomly interchangeable, and also sheds light on Ezekiel's understanding of these terms in the Pentateuch as he enlisted them to convey his message to the people.

The six Pentateuchal references to the defilement or desecration of a sacred precinct are all found in the Priestly Sources (Lev 15,31; 20,3; 21,12; 21,23; 22,9; and Num 19,13). There, bodily discharges such as genital fluxes, seminal emissions, and menstrual blood (Lev 15) are deemed causes of "defilement" which have the capacity to defile the sanctuary: "You shall set apart the Israelites from their impurity (מטמאות), lest they die through their impurity by polluting (במטאם) my Tabernacle which is among them" (v. 31)⁽³⁴⁾. Fluid bodily discharges cause impurity that defiles the sanctuary, thus rendering the impure person deserving of death.

A second cause of defilement is idolatry, specifically the worship of Molech. Leviticus 20 begins with the laws concerning a person who gives his offspring to Molech, whom God threatens to "cut off" from the people "because he dedicated his offspring, thus defiling my sanctuary (למען טמא את מקדשי) and desecrating my holy name (ולחלל את שם קדשי)" (v. 3). Giving offspring to Molech thus defiles the sacred precinct and desecrates the holy name. A person who commits this act is punished by God — by being cut off from the people — and by humans through stoning.

The third defiling agent in the Priestly Sources is corpse impurity. Numbers 19 describes the preparation of the ash of the red heifer and how it is used for purification from corpse impurity. In this context, impurity caused by exposure to a corpse is explicitly mentioned as a means of defiling the Temple:

"One who had contact with a corpse belonging to any human being who had died, but failed to purify himself, has defiled the Tabernacle of YHWH. That person shall be cut off from Israel, because water of lustration was not dashed on him. He remains impure; his impurity endures within him." (v. 13)

⁽³⁴⁾ This verse is perhaps the concluding verse of all of the pericopes concerning impurity (11,27–15,30) and does not necessarily relate to the impurities described in chapter 15, as assumed here. See M. BOLLE, *Va-Yiqra* (Da'at Miqra; Jerusalem 1992) 284.

“But any person who becomes impure, but fails to purify himself — that person shall be cut off from the midst of the congregation, for it is the Sanctuary of YHWH that he has defiled. Water of lustration was not dashed on him: he remains impure.” (v. 20)⁽³⁵⁾.

Accordingly, the Priestly Sources attribute the defilement of the sanctuary to the three factors of idolatry, bodily emissions and corpse impurity.

Ezekiel clearly enlists the concept of Temple defilement in the same manner in which it is used in the Priestly Sources. Ezek 9,7 — as we saw — speaks of the presence of corpses as defiling the Temple, and 5,11 mentions the defilement caused by idolatry. Ezek 23,39 draws an indirect association between the particular phenomenon of child sacrifices and the Temple’s defilement, a link more clearly established in Lev 20,3. And although Ezekiel makes no explicit reference to the impurity caused by bodily discharges, Ezek 23,38 could be understood as a general injunction against introducing any type of ritual impurity into the Temple⁽³⁶⁾.

IV. “Desecration” in the Priestly Sources

If regarding the concept of “defilement” Ezekiel closely adheres to the model established in the Priestly Sources, in his usage of the term “desecration” he charts his own path. In Leviticus, desecration results from the disruption of the priestly functions. For example, Leviticus 21 lists the restrictions imposed on the high priest due to his high office, and requires that he remain in the sanctuary even after the death of a family member: “He shall not leave the sacred area so that he not desecrate (ולא יחלל) the sacred area of his God, for the distinction of the anointing oil of his God is upon him. I (who speak) am YHWH” (v. 12). A high priest who leaves the shrine because of the death of a close relative has caused the desecration of the holy precinct⁽³⁷⁾.

The end of Leviticus 21 addresses the status of a priest with a physical deformity, and mandates that such a priest “shall not enter before the veil or officiate at the altar, for he has a blemish. And he may not desecrate (ולא יחלל) my sanctums. (Thereby) I am YHWH who sanctifies them” (v. 23). Thus, a priest (presumably referring specifically to a high priest⁽³⁸⁾) with a deformity

⁽³⁵⁾ For the purposes of this discussion, it is not necessary to establish whether the presence of any impure person in the camp causes, in one way or another, the defilement of the temenos, or if it can be defiled only through the entry of a person contaminated by corpse impurity.

⁽³⁶⁾ עוד זאת עשו לי, במצא את מקדשי... (This too they did to me: they defiled my sanctuary...).

⁽³⁷⁾ The syntax of this verse might suggest that the high priest desecrates the sanctuary simply by leaving the holy precinct. See MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1815–1818.

⁽³⁸⁾ Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra (in the *Torat Hayim* edition of the Bible, Jerusalem, 1990; Lev 21, 23) comments that the prohibition in Lev 21,23 (ולא יחלל) relates to the high priest and apparently refers to his entering the area behind the curtain on the Day of Atonement. See also MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1830–1831, where he interprets the verse as directed entirely to the high priest.

who enters the "sanctified area" ⁽³⁹⁾ or goes to offer a sacrifice on the outer altar ⁽⁴⁰⁾ desecrates the temenos.

Leviticus 22 deals with the injunction forbidding the priests to eat the sacred donations of the Israelites when they or the foods are ritually impure. Verse 9 concludes this discussion by admonishing, "They shall heed my prohibition lest they bear sin by it and die thereby when they desecrate it (כִּי יִהְיֶה לָהֶם; I am YHWH who sanctifies them)." It is difficult to determine whether the phrases "by it" and "when they desecrate it" refer to the sacred donations or to the sanctuary. While from the context it might appear that the verse speaks here of the holy things, it is possible that it is the sanctuary that is desecrated through the consumption of sacred donations in a forbidden state ⁽⁴¹⁾.

In Leviticus, then, the causes of desecration all relate to the disruption or suspension of the priests' ritual functions in the Temple. This concept of "desecration" differs significantly from Ezekiel's usage of this term in reference to the withdrawal of the Temple's sanctity in the wake of the sinful acts committed in its precincts, usually in the presence and through the means of foreigners.

V. Ezekiel's Exegesis

For Ezekiel, defilement of the Temple is defined primarily in terms of two of the causes mentioned in the Priestly Sources, namely, corpse impurity and idolatry ⁽⁴²⁾. The concept of defilement is grounded in very specific actions, as delineated in the Priestly Sources, and this status cannot surface through any other means. Ezekiel's strict adherence to the Priestly Sources' definitions of defilement may perhaps be attributed to his being a member of the priestly caste in exile, which led him to insist upon the preservation of the Pentateuchal classifications.

⁽³⁹⁾ MILGROM (ibid.) emphasizes the difference between the phrasing אֶל הַפֶּתַח לֹא יָבֹא, which he understands as referring to the sanctified area of the tabernacle, and מִבֵּית לַפְּרוֹכֶת, which refers to the Holy of Holies. In his view, it is to this latter area that a high priest with a deformity is forbidden entry to perform routine activities such as the rites of the menorah and the table. Any priest with a blemish can enter the sacred area for non-cultic purposes, such as covering the sanctums in preparation for journey, or for their cleansing, and so on. The permission granted to priests with deformities to consume consecrated food indicates that they are not barred from contact with sacred things, but only from active participation in the Temple cult.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Joseph Bekhor Shor comments that this refers to the golden altar, but most commentators understand it as referring to the outer altar. See MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1830–1831.

⁽⁴¹⁾ See, for example, Ibn Ezra, *ad loc.* According to this understanding, carelessness with regard to the consumption of sancta in purity by the priests leads to sin, desecration of the Temple, and death. If so, then this signifies the only instance in Scripture where the concepts of defilement and desecration converge with respect to the sanctuary: consumption of sacralized food in an impure state desecrates the sacred precinct. See also MILGROM, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1859, where he suggests other interpretations of this verse.

⁽⁴²⁾ Our discussion of the terms "defile" and "desecrate" thus adds a new dimension to Hurvitz's comprehensive study, which does not address these terms. See A. HURVITZ, *A Linguistic Study of the Relationship Between the Priestly Source and The Book of Ezekiel* (Paris 1982).

When it comes to the Temple's desecration, however, Ezekiel recognizes a broader definition than that which is used in the Priestly Sources. Desecration constitutes the absence of sanctity, rather than a particular status that is assigned under specifically prescribed conditions. As such, the phenomenon of desecration is far more flexible than defilement. Since it is merely the absence of holiness, any instrument by which holiness is divested from the Temple can be said to desecrate the Temple. Thus, even factors that the Pentateuch does not associate with desecration may constitute agents of desecration at a later period, if they have the effect of divesting the holy precinct of its sanctity.

The flexibility of the concept of "desecration" enabled Ezekiel to introduce factors more relevant to his own period, even though they are not mentioned as "desecrating" factors in the Priestly Sources or elsewhere in the Pentateuch. Thus, whereas in the Pentateuch the desecration of the *temenos* results from the disruption of the sacred cult, in Ezekiel it usually ensues from the entry of gentiles into the Temple, or of Israelites who have just sacrificed their children to idols.

This conclusion sheds further light on the question of what sources were available to Ezekiel when he wrote his book. Ezekiel was obviously familiar with the Priestly Sources' concepts of defilement and desecration of the sacred precinct, and he simply utilized and adjusted these concepts in accordance with his prophetic needs. There is also evidence for Ezekiel's familiarity with Deuteronomic terminology, as exemplified by his use of the terms שִׁקְצִים and תַּעֲבֹת; that, however, remains a topic for independent consideration.

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SUMMARY

An examination of the passages in Ezekiel related to the "defilement" and "desecration" of the Temple through the spectrum of the Priestly Sources clearly shows a distinction between the two concepts and reveals Ezekiel's precise and deliberate usage of these terms. Although they both relate to idolatrous practices, defilement of the Temple in Ezekiel follows the categories of the Priestly Sources, and thus results primarily from corpse impurity and idol worship. With regard to the Temple's desecration, Ezekiel introduces the aspect of the intense involvement of foreigners, which he viewed as the desecrating agents of his day.

A Woman Will “Encompass” a Man: On Gender Reversal in Jer 31,22b

The pronouncement “a woman will encompass a man” (נִקְבְּהָ תְּסֻבֵּב גִּבּוֹר) in Jer 31,22b has always been a *crux interpretum* for Hebrew Bible interpreters. It has been described as “a proverb whose original meaning eludes present generations”⁽¹⁾, “enigmatic”⁽²⁾, “incurably obscure or unintelligible”⁽³⁾, “ein ungelöstes Rätsel”⁽⁴⁾. Yet it is not only modern interpreters who have been puzzled by this statement; apparently even the ancient versions experienced problems in making sense of this saying. The different ancient texts rendered v. 22b as follows:

MT: כִּי־בָרָא יְהוָה מְלָאכָה נְדִיחָה בְּאֶרֶץ נִקְבְּהָ תְּסֻבֵּב גִּבּוֹר

(“For the Lord has created something new on earth: a woman will encompass a man”)

LXX: “for the Lord has created salvation for a new plantation, in which salvation man shall go about”⁽⁵⁾

Targum: “For behold, the Lord is creating a new thing upon the earth: the people, the house of Israel, shall pursue the Law”⁽⁶⁾

Vulgate: “quia creavit Dominus novum super terram femina circumdabit virum”

Jer 31,21-22 forms a separate literary periscope⁽⁷⁾ within the broader rhetorical unit, “The Book of Restoration”, starting at 30,1 and continuing until 33,26⁽⁸⁾. V. 22 has, however, connections with both the preceding and the following verses. Backwards it links up with the beginning of Chapter 30 and one can agree with Lundbom, who holds that: “... the line here in 22b is structurally connected to 30:6 ... creating an associative link of similar ideas and recurring irony”⁽⁹⁾. With regard to its relationship with the following

⁽¹⁾ B.A. BOZAK, *Life ‘Anew’*. A Literary-Theological Study of Jer 30–31 (Rome 1991) 104.

⁽²⁾ H.B. HUFFMON, “Gender Subversion in the Book of Jeremiah”, *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East* (eds. S. PARPOLA – R.M. WHITING) (RAI 47; Helsinki 2002) 252.

⁽³⁾ W. MCKANE, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah* (ICC; Edinburgh 1996) II, 806.

⁽⁴⁾ A. WEISER, *Das Buch Jeremia* (ATD; Göttingen 1966) 282.

⁽⁵⁾ Translation by B. BECKING, *Between Fear and Freedom*. Essays on the Interpretation of Jeremiah 30–31 (Leiden 2004) 221.

⁽⁶⁾ Translation by R. HAYWARD, *The Targum of Jeremiah* (Collegeville 1987) 133.

⁽⁷⁾ See e.g., J.R. LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21–36* (AB; New York 2004) 448; MCKANE, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 803; R.P. CARROLL, *Jeremiah*. A Commentary (OTL; Philadelphia, PA 1986) 601; WEISER, *Das Buch Jeremia*, 281.

⁽⁸⁾ LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 368.

⁽⁹⁾ LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 451; see also D. SAWYER, “Gender-Play and Sacred Text: a Scene from Jeremiah”, *JSOT* 83 (1999) 99–111; N. LOHFINK, “Der junge Jeremia als Propagandist und Poet. Zum Grundstock von Jer 30–31”, *Le Livre de Jérémie* (ed. P.-M. BOGAERT) (Leuven 1981) 351–368. The first part of Jer 30,6 runs as follows: “Ask and see:

verses, it has been claimed that in "Jer 31, 22 wird von einem „Neuen“ gesprochen, augenscheinlich im Zusammenhang mit dem „Neuen“ Jer 31,31, ..." ⁽¹⁰⁾.

What is of interest in the history of interpretation of this obscure phrase (נִקְבָּה הַסּוֹבֵב גִּבּוֹר) in Jer 31,22b are mainly two aspects: (1) the wide divergence in renderings between the MT, on the one hand, and the LXX and Targum, on the other hand ⁽¹¹⁾; (2) the variety of interpretations which has been offered to solve this problematic passage. An investigation into the scholarly literature on the passage reveals that originally solutions such as those explaining it as a gloss or by taking recourse to an emendation were most popular ⁽¹²⁾. Hopefully the analysis below is convincing enough to show that there is no need for such measures. The text as it stands makes perfect sense.

Recent suggestions are, however, of a more intertextual ⁽¹³⁾ and cultural nature. Especially significant in the latter respect is the proposal to explain the pronouncement in terms of the well-known cultural phenomenon of gender role reversal, a suggestion going as far back as Umbreit ⁽¹⁴⁾. Proponents of the last explanation are most probably on the right track, but what they fail to demonstrate satisfactorily is how this proclamation on role reversal in Jer 31,22b relates (1) to the multiple other ancient Near Eastern cultural contexts (literary, social-political and religious), where the same principle of reversal (*mundus inversus*, world upside-down, *verkehrte Welt*) is likewise attested, and (2) how this oracle on gender reversal in Jer 31,22b is connected with a related announcement on symbolic role inversion at the beginning of this rhetorical unit (Jer 30,5-6) ⁽¹⁵⁾. In order to argue this case, I will firstly make a

can a male bear children? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in travail".

⁽¹⁰⁾ R. NORTH, הַדָּשׁ, TWAT II, 771.

⁽¹¹⁾ For solving this *crux*, however, these versions are not of any interpretive help, since their respective renderings are coloured by religious-ideological factors. See E. TOV, *Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (Jerusalem 1981) 68; BECKING, *Between Fear and Freedom*, 37; G. VERMES, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Leiden 1973) 60 and E. NESTLE, "Miscellen", ZAW 25 (1905) 220-221.

⁽¹²⁾ Cf., e.g., MCKANE, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 601-602 for a list of some of these proposals.

⁽¹³⁾ Cf. the views of WEISER (*Das Buch Jeremia*, 282) and B.W. ANDERSON ("The Lord Has Created Something New". A Stylistic Study of Jer 31:15-22", *CBQ* 40 [1978] 463-478) who associate this saying with the renewal of the blessing of creation in Gen 1, 27. This interpretation is also not seen as a viable option since not enough justice is done to the specific context in which the problematic root סָבַב is attested.

⁽¹⁴⁾ F.W.C. UMBREIT, *Praktischer Kommentar über den Jeremia, mit exegetischen und kritischen Anmerkungen* (Hamburg 1842) 207: "von nun an soll nicht mehr der Mann das Weib, sondern das Weib den Mann beschützen". BOZAK, *Life 'Anew'*, 104, sees in this announcement the reversal of "a curse, and it could very well be the curse of Gn 3:16 which states that the woman will be subservient to her husband"; cf. also Sawyer, "Gender-Play and Sacred Text", 99-111; LUNDBOM, *Jeremiah 21-36*, 451: "reversal of the natural order of things," and W.L. HOLLADAY, "Jer xxxi 22b Reconsidered: The Woman Encompasses the Man", VT 16 (1966) 236-239, who regards this pronouncement as a reversal of the treaty curse in Jer 30,6. See also most recently BECKING (*Between Fear and Freedom*, 225) who argues: "The Hebrew verb סָבַב refers to a welcoming gesture. Israel is seen as a female that will encompass her children that unexpectedly returned from exile".

⁽¹⁵⁾ For studies seeing a thematic connection between these two passages, see Footnote 9.

few general remarks on the nature of the *mundus inversus topos* and after that attempt to indicate how this background could possibly assist us in making sense of the obscure saying in Jer 31,22b.

1. *The topos of the mundus inversus*

The phenomenon of reversal (*mundus inversus*) is widespread in the literatures and cultures of the world and it has long been a topic of interest for anthropologists and sociologists alike⁽¹⁶⁾. Symbolic inversion (*mundus inversus*) refers to a place where everything is reversed in relation to the normal state of affairs. Babcock presents the following anthropological characterisation: "Symbolic inversion may be broadly defined as any act of expressive behavior which inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or in some fashion presents an alternative to commonly held cultural codes, values, and norms, be they linguistic, literary or artistic, religious, or social and political"⁽¹⁷⁾. The oldest manifestations of this *topos* go back to the cultures of the ancient Near East⁽¹⁸⁾. According to Babcock's definition above, the idea of symbolic inversion presents itself in different forms and cultural contexts. One of its earliest origins could be traced back to cultic-religious or quasi-carnival celebrations, where traditional codes of social conduct are reversed or suspended for a given time⁽¹⁹⁾.

In Sumerian literature a classic example in this respect would be the dedication festivities of the Eninnu temple (Gudea Cylinder B), where it is

⁽¹⁶⁾ Cf. e.g., BABCOCK, *The Reversible World*; S. LURIA, "Die Ersten werden die Letzten sein", *Klio* XXII (1929) 405-431 and H. JEBENS, "Verkehrte Welt", *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* (eds. H. CANKI, et al.) (Stuttgart 2000) V, 323-327.

⁽¹⁷⁾ BABCOCK, *The Reversible World*, 14.

⁽¹⁸⁾ H. KENNER, *Das Phänomen der verkehrten Welt in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Klagenfurt 1970); M. MALUL, *Knowledge, Control and Sex. Studies in Biblical Thought, Culture and Worldview* (Tel Aviv 2002) 478-480. One such important manifestation of this principle relates to the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean ethnographical domains, where certain groups constructed their perceptions of "other" groups through the strategy of "symbolic inversion". In this respect something similar happened to what F. KRAMER, *Verkehrte Welten. Zur imaginären Ethnographie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt 1981) 7, observes in a much later time: "Die Ethnographie des 19. Jahrhundert entwirft im Hinblick auf die 'eigene' Kultur die 'fremde' als verkehrte Welt". For a selection of ancient Near Eastern examples illustrating this "inverted" nature of the culture of other peoples, cf. P.A. KRUGER, "The World 'Topsy-Turvy' and the Ancient Near Eastern Cultures: A Few Examples", *Anthropology Southern Africa* 29 (2006) 115-121; see also B. PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, "The Other and the Enemy in the Mesopotamian Conception of the World", *Mythology and Mythologies* (ed. R.M. WHITING) (Helsinki 2001) 195-231 and Y. COHEN, "The Image of the 'Other' and Hittite Historiography", *Historiography in the Cuneiform World* (ed. T. ABUSCH) (RAI XLV; Bethesda 2001) 113-129 (with literature). For later examples of the same strategy by Herodotus and Tacitus, cf. F. HARTOG, *The Mirror of Herodotus* (Berkeley 1988) and R. BLOCH, *Antike Vorstellungen vom Judentum. Der Judenexkurs des Tacitus im Rahmen der Griechisch-Römischen Ethnographie* (Stuttgart 2002).

⁽¹⁹⁾ LURIA, "Die Ersten werden die Letzten sein"; see also J. ASSMANN, "Königsdogma und Heilserwartung. Politische und kultische Chaosbeschreibungen in ägyptischen Texten", *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (ed. D. HELLMHOLM) (Tübingen 1983) 345-377; S. DÖPP (hrsg.), *Karnevaleske Phänomene in antiken und nachantiken Kulturen und Literaturen* (Trier 1993).

imagined that masters/mistresses are on a par with their slaves for a given time. The text runs: "When his king entered into the temple, for seven days (xvii.20) the slave girl did become equal with her mistress; the slave did walk beside the master" (20).

Similar feasts are attested under the Jews (Purim)⁽²¹⁾, the Greeks (Anthesteria) and the Romans (Saturnalia)⁽²²⁾, and up to modern times in carnival-like celebrations, such as the German Fasching⁽²³⁾. Different suggestions have been presented to understand the function of the symbolic inversions/reversals in these circumstances: in certain contexts they could be aimed at criticising, undermining or subverting a given *status quo*, in others, however, they could serve the purpose of reinforcing or legitimising a dominant social order⁽²⁴⁾.

The fascination with a "reversed world" was likewise present in the art arena. Some of the first attestations in this respect can be found in ancient Egypt, where artists portray a fanciful world in which a cat submits to mice and where a fox shepherds geese⁽²⁵⁾. This artistic form experienced a revival in the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, when image-makers devoted a large share of their energy to depictions of a world turned upside down⁽²⁶⁾.

The popularity of the *topos* of inversion was likewise evident in the literary sphere. The genre of the satire could for, example, be regarded as a powerful strategy in portraying such an "inverse world"⁽²⁷⁾. But it was

(20) Translation by R.E. AVERBECK, "The Cylinders of Gudea (2.155)", *The Context of Scripture* (eds. W.H. HALLO, et al.) (Leiden 2003) II, 432.

(21) Cf. also the recent attempt of S. SCHORCH ("Die Propheten und die Karneval: Marzeach – Maioumas – Maimuna", VT 53 [2003] 397-415) to interpret the Israelite *marzeach* feast along the same lines.

(22) H. STUBBE, "Trauerverhalten und das Phänomen der verkehrten Welt", *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 113 (1988) 199-205; F. GRAF, "Frauenfeste und verkehrte Welt", *Geschlechterdifferenz, Ritual und Religion* (Hrsg. W. KLINGER, et al.) (Würzburg 2003) 37-51.

(23) F. STOLZ, *Grundzüge der Religionswissenschaft* (Göttingen 1997) 94.

(24) See E.M. VEEN, "The Role of Symbolic Inversion in Utopian Discourse: Apocalyptic Reversal in Paul and in the Festival of the Saturnalia/Kronia", *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance. Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul* (ed. R.A. HORSLEY) (Atlanta, GA 2004) 128 and C. AUFFARTH, *Der drohende Untergang* (Berlin 1991) 22-24. Cf. also the view of J.C. SCOTT, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven 1990) 168: "Inversions ... play an important imaginative function ... They do, at least at the level of thought, create an imaginative breathing space in which the normal categories of order and hierarchy are less than completely inevitable ... When we manipulate any social classification imaginatively — turning it inside out and upside down — we are forcibly reminded that it is to some degree an arbitrary human creation".

(25) H. KENNER, "Das Phänomen der verkehrten Welt in der klassischen Antike", *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, 41 (1967) 11-14; E. BRUNNER-TRAUT, "Altägyptische Tiergeschichte und Fabel. Gestalt und Strahlkraft", *Saeculum*, 10 (1959) 124-185 and D. FLORES, "The Topsy-Turvy World", *Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean World. Studies in Honor of Donald B. Redford* (ed. G.N. KNOPPERS) (Leiden 2004) 233-255.

(26) R. CHARTIER, "The World Turned Upside-Down", *Cultural History. Between Practices and Representations* (ed. R. CHARTIER; translated by L.G. COCHRANE) (Oxford 1988) 115-126.

(27) K. LAZAROWICZ, *Verkehrte Welt. Vorstudien zu einer Geschichte der deutschen Satire* (Tübingen 1963); E. GUTWIRTH, "The 'World Upside Down' in Hebrew", *Orientalia Suecana* XXX (1981) 141-147 and H. STRAUSS, "Motiv und Strukturen von Umkehrungsprüchen in Ägypten und im Alten Testament", *ZAW* 115 (2003) 25-37.

especially in ancient Near Eastern socio-political-religious contexts that the *mundus inversus topos* has found its broadest application (1) to depict in a negative sense a world in which everything is turned upside down, or (2) to propagate in a positive fashion a future messianic or utopian age, where these contraries of life will finally be reconciled⁽²⁸⁾.

In his most informative analysis of the basic social characteristics of “das Mythologem von der verkehrten Welt”, the sociologist Mühlmann⁽²⁹⁾ devotes special attention to these two important socio-historical manifestations of symbolic inversion⁽³⁰⁾. The former pessimistic version he associates with the socio-political upper or aristocratic level of society (“Oberschicht”), whilst the latter euphoric stance is found among the plebs or the underdogs on the social ladder (“Untersicht”)⁽³¹⁾. One such ancient Near Eastern text, which may be regarded as a classic example of “inverted social criticism” from an upper-class point of view, is a papyrus of the 19th dynasty in Egypt, “The Admonitions of Ipuwer”. It laments a world where the entire social order is “inverted”, if compared to what is usually regarded as the norm in that specific sphere. The text runs:

Indeed, poor men have become owners of wealth,
He who could not make for himself sandals own riches.
(First Poem Lines 2.4-5)⁽³²⁾
Behold, the possessors of robes are (now) in rags,
He who never wove for himself
is (now) the possessor of fine linen.
Behold, he who never built for himself a boat
is (now) the possessor of ships, ...
Behold, he who had no property
is (now) a possessor of wealth.
(Second Poem Lines 7.11-8.1)⁽³³⁾

⁽²⁸⁾ R.C. van LEEUWEN, “Proverbs 30:21-23 and the Biblical World Upside Down”, *JBL* 105 (1986) 599-610. Another important religious manifestation of the *topos* of inversion in many cultures in the world is the marking of boundaries between normal life and life after death: life after death is in many instances the direct reverse of ordinary life; see e.g., P.A. KRUGER, “Symbolic Inversion in Death: Some Examples From the Old Testament and the Ancient Near Eastern World”, *Verbum et Ecclesia* 26 (2005) 398-411 = “Symbolic Inversion in Death: Some Examples from the Old Testament and the Ancient Near Eastern World”, *Psalms and Mythology* (ed. D.J. HUMAN) (London 2007) 204-216. Ancient Near Eastern mourning rites often display a similar “topsy turviness”; for this, cf. P.A. KRUGER, “The Inverse World of Mourning in the Hebrew Bible”, *Biblische Notizen NF* 124 (2005) 41-49.

⁽²⁹⁾ W.E. MÜHLMANN, “Das Mythologem von der verkehrten Welt”, *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 13 (1961) 614-624; see also his *Chiliasmus und Nativismus* (Berlin 1961) 333.

⁽³⁰⁾ For the following examples supplied here, cf. KRUGER, “The World ‘Topsy-Turvy’”, 119.

⁽³¹⁾ MÜHLMANN, “Das Mythologem von der verkehrten Welt”, 618.

⁽³²⁾ The translation is by N. SHUPAK, “The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage: the Admonitions of Ipuwer”, *The Context of Scripture* (ed. W.H. HALLO, et al.) (Leiden 2003) I, 94.

⁽³³⁾ The translation is by SHUPAK, “The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage”, 96.

The New Kingdom "Prophecies of Neferti" paints a similar "inverted" world:

I show you the land in turmoil,
 The weak of arm
 is (now) the possessor of an arm,
 One salutes him who (formerly) saluted.
 I show you the lowly as superior ...
 The poor man will make wealth,
 The great one will (pray) to live.
 The beggar will eat bread,
 The slaves will be exalted.
 (Lines 54-56) ⁽³⁴⁾

2. Jeremiah 30–31 and the topos of the mundus inversus

Against this background we can now return to the Jeremiah 30–31. First we look at the gender reversal pronouncement at the beginning of Jer 30 (v. 6), where the rhetorical question is asked whether a male in times of distress would exhibit an attitude naturally expected of a female: "Ask and see: can a male bear children? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in travail". Between this pronouncement and what is stated in Jer 31,22b there is a direct connection, or to put it in the words of Sawyer: "These two verses, 30.6 and 31.22, which appear respectively at the beginning and end of a recognized literary unit, can be understood as the counter-face of patriarchal society where the norm is for men to dominate and women to obey" ⁽³⁵⁾. To ascribe to a male characteristics which are customarily expected of women, therefore, would obviously have been conceived as being quite against the normal order of things and typical of a *mundus inversus* order of existence.

Compare, for example, the following prototypical expectations regarding masculinity and femininity in an Ur III birth incantation from which it is clear that men are generally perceived as warriors and women as the weaker sex: "If it is a male ... he holds in his hand a weapon and an axe, which is his strength of heroship. If it is a female ... she holds in her hand a spindle and a decorated comb" ⁽³⁶⁾. One could therefore imagine that a pronouncement such as the one in Jer 30,6, where maleness is associated with what is biologically expected of women, would have been experienced as indeed a disgrace or a deadly curse.

There are several more examples elsewhere in the ancient Near East where similar feminine qualities are assigned to men and many of them have their origin in curses. The following stereotypical pronouncements clearly betray that to be womanlike implies to be weak.

The first one stems from a Hittite self-maledictory oath where the following threat is made: "Whoever breaks these oaths ... let these oaths change him from a man to a woman! Let them change his troops into women,

⁽³⁴⁾ The translation is by SHUPAK, "The Prophecies of Neferti", *The Context of Scripture* (ed. W.H. HALLO, et al.) I, 109.

⁽³⁵⁾ SAWYER, "Gender-Play and Sacred Text", 104.

⁽³⁶⁾ ASHER-GREVE, "Decisive Sex, Essential Gender," 13.

let them dress them in the fashion of women ... Let them break the bows, arrows, (and) weapons in their hands and let them put in their hands distaff and mirror" (37).

A similar malediction occurs in the treaty between Ashur-nerari V of Assyria and Mati'ilu from Arpad: "If Mati'ilu sins against this treaty with Ashur-nerari, king of Assyria, may Mati'ilu become a prostitute, his soldiers women, may they receive [a gift] in the square of their cities like any prostitute, may one country *push* them to the next; may Mati'ilu's (sex) life be that of a mule, his wives extremely old; may Ishtar, the goddess of men, the lady of women, take away their bow ..." (38).

Some others similar occurrences are encountered in biblical Hebrew prophetic taunts. Compare, for example, the announcement, once again in the book of Jeremiah: "The powerful men of Babylon have ceased fighting, they remained in their strongholds. Their strength has failed, they became women" (Jer 51,30; see also Isa 19,16, Jer 50,37, Nah 3,13) (39). The utterance on gender role reversal in Jer 30, 5-6 clearly belongs in the same category: it is likewise to be seen as a curse signifying a *mundus inversus* order of existence (40).

3. Jer 31,22b, *mundus inversus* and *utopianism*

The utterance on gender role reversal in Jer 31,22b, however, is clearly of a different nature. It is not a curse, but a promise, as may be seen from passages elsewhere in the writings of the Hebrew Bible prophets. There one comes across the subversive potential of the same *mundus inversus* principle, but this time, according to Mühlmann (41), from the perspective of those at the "lower levels" of society. The tone of these type of sayings is now different: the

(37) See H.C. WASHINGTON, "'Lest He Die in the Battle and Another Take Her': Violence and the Construction of Gender in the Laws of Deuteronomy 20-22", *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (eds. V.H. MATTHEWS, et al.) (Sheffield 1998) 197; see also V. HAAS, "Rituell-magische Aspekte in der althebraischen Strafvollstreckung", *Offizielle Religion, lokale Kulte und individuelle Religiosität* (hrsg. M. HUTTER – S. HUTTER-BRAUNSAR) (AOAT 318; Münster 2004) 218.

(38) Translated by S. PARPOLA – K. WATANABE, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* (Helsinki 1988) 12; see also P. GILBERT, "The Function of Imprecation in Israel's Eighth-Century Prophets", <http://www.directionjournal.org/article/?1419>. Cf. also David's curse of Joab, where it is said that all males in Joab's ancestry "will hold the spindle" (2 Sam 3,29); see S.C. LAYTON, "A Chain Gang in 2 Samuel III 29? A Rejoinder", *VT* 39 (1989) 81-86; cf. also K. VAN DER TOORN, *Van Haar Wieg tot Haar Graf* (Baarn 1987) 16 and H.A. HOFFNER, "Symbols for Masculinity and Femininity", *JBL* 85 (1966) 326-334, for other items symbolising femininity.

(39) See MALUL, *Knowledge, Control and Sex*, 354 and Washington, "'Lest He Die in the Battle and Another Take Her'", 197.

(40) See BOZAK, *Life 'Anew'*, 104. In the same vein, also compare a similar motif in Christianity where the *Gospel of Thomas* closes with the admonition that before a woman can share in salvation she has to be transformed into a man: "Simon Peter said to them [the other disciples], 'Let Mary leave us, because women are not worthy of life.' Jesus said, 'Behold, I myself shall lead her so as to make her male, that she may become a living spirit like you males. For every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven'" (S.P. RAMEY, "Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures: an Introduction", *Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures* (ed. S.P. RAMEY) (London 1996) 5).

(41) Examples supplied by MÜHLMANN, "Das Mythologem von der verkehrten Welt", 619.

inversion of the normal state of things is no longer a curse, but to be welcomed, since it holds out the promise of a new social order in which "The few shall become thousand, the least a mighty nation" (Isa 60,22); "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. The lame shall leap like a deer" (Isa 35,5-6); "Men once sated, hire themselves out for bread; those once hungered, hunger no more. The barren woman bears seven (children), she that had many children is languishing" (1 Sam 2,5). The reversals of this coming age can even reach cosmic proportions: "In place of the thorn, a cypress shall come up. In place of the briar, a myrtle shall rise" (Isa 55,13)⁽⁴²⁾.

Against such an eschatological backdrop it is not unexpected to hear what is foreseen in Jer 31,22b, namely that the woman will assume a strange new role definition in the future world. This, according to the writer of the Jeremiah text (31,22b), is something "new" (חדש), something which is, however, likely in an ideal form of existence where an inverse order of things is the norm. The exact nature of this "new" role label is not explicitly evident, however, but what may be deduced from this saying is that in the "new world order" to come the woman will assume a social role which stands in direct antithesis to the traditional expectations regarding femininity and that is: "the woman will סבב (Poel Impf.) the man." Whether סבב refers "to encompass", "to go around", "to court", or "to protect"⁽⁴³⁾, is difficult to determine. Perhaps its exact meaning is not that essential since, according to McKane, this statement has "the openness and indeterminacy of a proverb"⁽⁴⁴⁾. What must be grasped, however, is that in this "new divine order" the woman will adopt a role designation unheard of before, namely that she "plays his – a man's – part"⁽⁴⁵⁾.

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⁽⁴²⁾ MÜHLMANN, "Das Mythologem von der verkehrten Welt", 619. Instead of pointing to an eschatological future where this wholeness prevails, this paradisiacal order of existence could also be projected to a remote past (STOLZ, *Grundzüge der Religionswissenschaft*, 95-96). According to "Enki's Spell" in the Sumerian epic of Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta, "there being no snakes, there being no scorpions, there being no hyenas, there being no lions, there being no dogs or wolves, there being no(thing) fearful or hair-raising, mankind had no opponents" (T. JACOBSEN, "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta", *The Context of Scripture* [eds. W.H. HALLO, et al.] [Leiden 2003] I, 547). The Egyptian Theban cosmogony portrays a similar nostalgic picture at the beginning of time. It tells of an age when "walls did not fall in, a thorn did not prick, no evil existed in the land, no crocodile seized prey and snakes did not bite" (BRUNNER-TRAUT, "Altägyptische Tiergeschichte und Fabel", 145; my translation from the German).

⁽⁴³⁾ According to HUFFMON, "Gender Subversion in the Book of Jeremiah", 252, these are all suggestions proposed to understand this problematic term. However, the most suitable nuance of meaning still seems to be "to protect" for which a parallel passage such as Deut 32,10 may be adduced: "In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded (סבב Poel Impf.) him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye" (NIV; cf. also HOLLADAY, "Jer xxxi 22b Reconsidered", 237).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ MCKANE, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 806.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ HUFFMON, "Gender Subversion in the Book of Jeremiah", 252-253.

SUMMARY

This contribution reviews the various interpretations offered to understand the obscure pronouncement in Jer 31,22b: "A woman will encompass a man". One of the most popular proposals, which is also the most plausible, is to regard the utterance as an example of gender role reversal. What the proponents of this viewpoint fail to demonstrate satisfactorily, however, is how this saying in Jer 31,22b relates to the multiple other ancient Near Eastern cultural contexts (literary, social-political and religious) where the same *mundus inversus* principle is likewise attested. It is argued that this broad backdrop is a *sine qua non* for the proper understanding of this enigmatic passage.

Sectarianism and Soteriology. The Priestly Blessing (Numbers 6,24-26) in the Qumranite *Community Rule* (1QS)

While sociological differences regarding food, dress, and other practices can and did signal tension between some religious groups in Second Temple Judaism, distinctions directly related to the question of personal salvation in the afterlife served that purpose for others⁽¹⁾. This is particularly true of the group that settled at Qumran about 150 B.C.E., and due to the prominence of religious language and thought in the Qumranites' sectarian writings, conventional sociological and anthropological analyses are not capable of dealing comprehensively with the group's secession from, and continued existence apart from the rest of Second Temple Judaism⁽²⁾. Since corporately-uttered curses and blessings are valuable avenues for understanding the ideology of the groups who author and use them, this article will first consider the reuse of the blessing-curse pattern based on the Priestly Blessing (PB) of Numbers 6 in the *Community Rule* (1QS)⁽³⁾. Comparison of how curses in particular were applied elsewhere in Second Temple Judaism informs some closing reflections on what the imaginative redeployment of the PB at Qumran tells us of the group's ideology and self-identity⁽⁴⁾.

(¹) An earlier version of this paper was presented in the Curses and Curse Stories in Mediterranean Antiquity Group at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, 28 May 2007. While recognizing the value of conventional indices of sectarianism (tension, separation, difference, exclusivity, etc.; see B.R. WILSON, *The Social Dimensions of Sectarianism*. Sects and New Religious Movements in Contemporary Society [Oxford 1990]; R. STARK – W.S. BAINBRIDGE, *The Future of Religion*. Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation [Berkeley, CA 1985]), this paper explores their expression in terms of a religion concerned above all else with personal salvation from sin and its consequences.

(²) See over the last few decades W.H. BROWNEE, "Anthropology and Soteriology in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament", *Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays*. Essays in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring (ed. J.M. EFIRD) (Durham, NC 1972) 210-240; B. JANOWSKI – H. LICHTENBERGER, "Enderwartung und Reinheitsidee: Zur eschatologischen Deutung von Reinheit und Sühne in der Qumrangemeinde", *JJS* 34 (1983) 31-62; M.A. SEIFRID, *Justification by Faith*. The Origin and Development of a Central Pauline Theme (NovTSup 68, Leiden 1992) 81-108; M. BOCKMEHL, "1QS and Salvation at Qumran", *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 1: *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* (ed. D.A. CARSON – P.T. O'BRIEN – M.A. SEIFRID) (WUNT 2/140; Grand Rapids, MI – Tübingen 2001) 381-414.

(³) I define a curse (and, *mutatis mutandis*, a blessing) as a verbal expression of the wish that evil might befall someone, including but not limited to a "curse" lexeme but excluding pronouncements of woe. Blessings so defined overlap with prayers.

(⁴) See further S.H. BLANK, "The Curse, Blasphemy, the Spell, and the Oath", *HUCA* 23 (1950) 73-95; B. NITZAN, "Blessings and Curses", *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. L.H. SCHIFFMAN – J. C. VANDERKAM) (Leiden 2000) 1, 95-100. Such an approach has the advantage of constructing an understanding of the group's self-image from the perspective of the group itself rather than by using a model from elsewhere; see J.M. JOKIRANTA, "'Sectarianism' of the Qumran 'Sect': Sociological Notes", *RevQ* 20 (2001) 223-239.

I. The Priestly Blessing/Curse in 1QS

The carefully-crafted PB in Num 6,24-26 consists of three bipartite benedictions, consisting of three, five, and seven words, respectively:

יְבָרֵכְךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ:
 יְאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִחַנֶּנְךָ:
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֶּׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם:

The LORD bless you and keep you
 the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you
 the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give to you peace

The blessing explicates Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel in terms of his presence with them and especially of his commitment to give them restful well-being (שָׁלוֹם).

Its modification by the authors of 1QS, one of the most clearly sectarian documents to come from Qumran, is typical of the Dead Sea group's reuse of the Hebrew Scriptures, which established the sect's identity and distinct world view amid other groups in Second Temple Judaism⁽⁵⁾.

After an introduction that focuses on the halakhic aspect of the document's function and introduces the group's identity as those who obey God's law, the Rule prescribes a liturgy for "those who enter the covenant" (הַעֲבוּרִים בְּבְרִית, 1,24). Significantly, the covenant ceremony is followed, after brief positive and negative arguments for joining the group, by the extensive Two Spirits Discourse (3,13-4,26), a *locus classicus* for dualistic thought in the Qumranite corpus.

1. Blessing the Qumran Group via Numbers 6

As with 4Q285 and 1QSB, the blessing that the Qumranite priests pronounce in the *Community Rule* upon those of God's lot (2,1b-4a) expands on the PB but retains its main elements⁽⁶⁾:

⁽⁵⁾ By sectarian documents I mean those authored or used by the group to establish its identity; cf. C.A. NEWSOM, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran", *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters* (eds. W.H. PROPP – B. HALPERN – D.N. FREEDMAN) (Winona Lake 1990) 167-187. The latitude of the discussion of the redaction history of the S tradition cautions against excessively rigid conclusions in that regard, though 1QS likely represents a more developed point in the tradition; see, in favor of this view, C. HEMPEL, "The Literary Development of the S Tradition: A New Paradigm", *RevQ* 22/87 (2005) 389-400, and D. DIMANT, "The Composite Character of the Qumran Sectarian Literature as an Indication of Its Date and Provenance", *RevQ* 88/22 (2006) 615-630. For an alternative understanding, see S. METSO, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule* (STDJ 21; Leiden 1997). In any case, the document containing 1QS is consistently dated to the latter half of the first century B.C.E., placing its sectarianism in Qumran's mature period.

⁽⁶⁾ 4Q285, which is parallel to 11Q14 and may constitute part of 1QM, includes a blessing directed at the sons of light that reflects historical (Lev 26; Deut 27-28) and eschatological (Ezek 34, 36) covenant elements as well as cultic aspects (Num 6); see E.J.C. TIGCHELAAR, "Working with Few Data: The Relation between 4Q285 and 11Q14", *DSD* 7 (2000) 49-56. 1QSB pronounces a blessing derived from the PB upon "those who fear [God, do] his will, keep his commandments, remain constant in his holy covenant and walk with perfection [on all the paths of] his truth, those he has chosen for an eternal covenant which endures for ever" (1QSB 1,1-3a), and prays for eschatological war against

And the priests will bless all the men of God's lot
 who walk unblemished in all his paths
 and they shall say:
 "May he bless you with everything good,
 and may he protect you from everything bad.
 May he illuminate your heart with the discernment of life
 and grace you with eternal knowledge.
 May he lift upon you the countenance of his favour for eternal peace."
 (1QS 2,1b-4a)

The blessing's content is quite ordinary by both biblical and Qumranite standards. Changes with respect to the biblical form are limited to the replacement of the verbal element in "give you peace" with a noun, the elimination of the divine name, and the insertion of the sectarian petition that God would "illuminate your heart with the discernment of life and grace you with eternal knowledge"⁽⁷⁾. On the level of function the PB-derived blessing of the Community Rule also resembles in some ways the blessings of the OT, particularly in its emphasis on the divine agency that brings the benediction into being.

The differences between the use of the PB in the Community Rule and the use of comparable blessings in the OT, however, are extensive and intriguing. First, the modified PB and the curses which follow it in 1QS constitute a covenant renewal liturgy that differs markedly from the much more extensive complex of covenant blessings and sanctions delineated in the Pentateuch (Lev 26,4-12.14-39; Deut 27,15-27; 28,1-68). As a result, and unlike biblical Israel which proleptically pronounced upon itself either the covenant's blessings or its sanctions dependent upon her compliance with its demands, the Qumran community pronounced blessings upon itself without reference to its covenant fidelity. The preceding confession that "we have acted sinfully, we have [trans]gressed, we have [si]nned, we have committed evil" (1QS 1,24-25) is repeatedly pushed to the periphery of the covenant-renewing group's identity: first by assigning its recitation to the past life of the initiates (1,24-26), then by the preface to the blessing which directs it to those "who walk unblemished [רַמִּים] in all [God's] paths" (2,2), and finally by the absence of any link between obedience and blessing in the blessing itself⁽⁸⁾. Instead, the blessing's recipients are identified by means of their election as "the men of God's lot" (2,2). It is a testimony to the power of the concept of election in the sect's thought that here it displaces fidelity to the covenant's obligations as a means of obtaining the covenant's blessings. The

the "corrupt generation"; see further W. BAXTER, "1QSB: Old Divisions Made New", *RevQ* 84/21 (2006) 615-629. All citations of the DSS in translation are from F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ (ed.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*. The Qumran Texts in English (Leiden – Grand Rapids, MI 1996).

(7) See J.A. LOADER, "The Model of the Priestly Blessing in 1QS", *JSJ* 14 (1983) 11-17.

(8) More elements could be noted, such as the community's ability to atone for itself (cf. 1QS 5,4-7; 8,4b-10; 9,3-6); see D. TIMMER, "Sinai 'Revisited' Again: Further Reflections on Qumran's Appropriation of Exodus 19-Numbers 10 in 1QS", *RevB* 115 (2008) forthcoming.

fact that the writing prophets of the OT frequently contradict this presumption puts the ideology behind it in still sharper relief (Isa 10,20-22; Ezek 34,17-24; Amos 9).

2. Cursing Those outside the Qumran Group via Numbers 6

The PB pattern was uniquely suited for cursing in a sectarian context for the same reason, viz. since with it curses could be directed with the same infallible accuracy against the non-elect ("the men of Belial's lot," 1QS 2,4-5), that is, against all those who are not members of the sect. The juxtaposition of "God's lot" (גורל אלה) with "Belial's lot" (גורל בלעל) in the covenant ceremony again expresses a dualistic worldview that is further reinforced by the addition of a contrast between light in the blessing (ויאיר, 2,2) and darkness in the curse (עולמים מעשיכה וזעום אהבה באפלה אש, in 2,7)⁽⁹⁾.

And the levites shall curse all the men of the lot of Belial.
 They shall begin to speak and shall say:
 "Accursed are you for all your wicked, blameworthy deeds.
 May he (God) hand you over to dread
 into the hands of all those carrying out acts of vengeance.
 May he bring upon you destruction
 by the hand of all those who accomplish retributions.
 Accursed, without mercy, for the darkness of your deeds,
 and sentenced to the gloom of everlasting fire.
 May God not be merciful when you entreat him.
 Nor pardon you when you do penance for your faults.
 May he lift up the countenance of his anger to avenge himself on you,
 And may there be no peace for you in the mouth of those who
 intercede." (1QS 2,4b-9)

The use of a blessing as the pattern for a curse is not without a precedent in the OT (cf. Lev 26; Deut 27-28; Mal 1-2). What is remarkable, however, is that while biblical covenant curses are applied (potentially) to Israel, the curse in 1QS is applied to those who were *by birth members of the Jewish covenant community*. This is particularly striking when one considers that even when God's promises attach to Abram in Gen 12, in laying out the extent of God's saving actions in history they explicitly include "all the families of the world" (Gen 12,3; cf. the numerous references to משפחה in the Table of Nations, Gen 10,5.18.20.31.32, and the synonymous use of גוי in 18,18; 22,18; 26,4)⁽¹⁰⁾. This divine commitment to bless Abram's descendants comes to renewed expression in the blessing crafted for the newly constituted nation of Israel (Numbers 6), whose role vis-à-vis the nations remains positive (Exod 19,4-6)⁽¹¹⁾.

⁽⁹⁾ Loader, "Model", 16, notes that the elements of light and darkness are structurally in the center of their respective blessing and curse.

⁽¹⁰⁾ E.J. Schnabel, "Israel, The People of God, and the Nations", *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45 (2002) 35-57.

⁽¹¹⁾ On the global scope of the divine promises generally, see P.D. Miller, "Creation and Covenant", *Biblical Theology. Problems and Perspectives* (eds. S.J. Kraftchick – C.D. Myers – B.C. Ollenburger) (Nashville, TN 1995) 155-168.

The continuity in the referents of the PB in Numbers 6 (pronounced upon Abram's descendants as constituting the new nation of Israel) and the blessing of Abram and all his descendants in Gen 12 (which was familial in focus but pandemic in scope) illustrates to what extent 1QS has modified this facet of the HB's outlook by redirecting the PB. Driving this shift is a fundamental difference in the Dead Sea group's perception of its role in the world⁽¹²⁾. While the election of Abram and God's blessing of him were to serve the good of the entire human race, the same ideational complex served antithetical ends in 1QS. Not only did the sect decline to act as an agent of blessing for the world, but its posture toward outsiders of any stripe, Jews as well as Gentiles, was consistently dismissive in 1QS and other writings from the sect's mature period⁽¹³⁾.

II. Similar Curses in Other Second Temple Literature

While other Jewish literature of the Second Temple period also attests curses by Jews directed at other Jews, those maledictions almost always use moral criteria as the primary means to identify their targets, which include "sinners," the "wicked", or those who have committed a specific sin (e.g., intermarriage with Gentiles)⁽¹⁴⁾.

An interesting example of this phenomenon appears in *Jubilees* 23, where the renewed younger generation of Jews accuse their progenitors of unfaithfulness to the covenant (*Jub* 23,16). This new generation mounts a corrective military campaign against the older sinners, but to no avail, and *Jubilees* consequently proclaims that "a great punishment shall befall the deeds of this generation from the Lord, and He will give them over to the

⁽¹²⁾ When applied in this way, the PB-curse develops "the social solidarity and self-identity of the community by excluding other individuals or groups from that community" primarily on the tautological basis of the members' election and non-members' non-election, and secondarily with respect to obedience to the (sectarians') law; J.S. ANDERSON, "The Social Function of Curses in the Hebrew Bible", *ZAW* 110 (1998) 223-237 (235).

⁽¹³⁾ My approach to Qumran's sectarianism is in accord with the diachronic taxonomies of the group's literary corpus proposed by García Martínez and van der Woude (see F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – A.S. VAN DER WOUDE, "A 'Groningen' Hypothesis of Qumran Origins and Early History", *RevQ* 14/56 [1990] 521-541) and by G. BOCCACCINI, "Qumran and the Enoch Groups: Revisiting the Enochic-Essene Hypothesis", *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls* I. Scripture and the Scrolls (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (Waco, TX 2006) 37-66.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Outside the Dead Sea Scrolls, see *1 En* 5,5-7 (against the wicked, contrasted with the elect); 41,8 (against sinners); 80,2-8 (against sinners); 97,10 (a woe against sinners, the unjust rich, and liars); 98,4b (against sinners); 102,3 (against sinners); *Jub* 9,14-15 (potentially against Noah's descendants); 20,6 (against sinners); 24,27-33 (against the Philistines); 26,34 (Isaac against Esau); 30,15 (against Jews who intermarry); *Bar* 2,2-5 (against sinful Jews, including the speaker); *TLevi* 14,4 (a threatened curse against impiety); *PsSol* 4,14-22 (against hypocrites). In the Dead Sea Scrolls, in addition to the texts surveyed above see 1QS 4,12-14; CD 1,13-2,1; 1QM 13,4-5; 4Q201 2,12-17 (= parts of *1 En* 2,1-5,6); 4Q280; 4Q286 frag. 7 line 2,13; 4Q289 frag. 1 lines 1-2; 4Q377 frag. 1 recto lines 2,4-6; 4Q473 frag. 2 lines 3-8. Here I draw on and modify the list given by J.S. ANDERSON, "Denouncement Speech in Jubilees and Other Enochic Literature", *Enoch and Qumran Origins*. New Light on a Forgotten Connection (ed. G. BOCCACCINI) (Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 132-136 (132, n. 1).

sword and to judgment and to captivity, and to be plundered and devoured" (23,22). The fact that God uses "the sinners of the Gentiles" to effect his semi-eschatological punishment makes clear that this prediction is directed against unfaithful Israelites⁽¹⁵⁾. Despite the punished generation's prayers for deliverance, "there will be none who will be saved" (23,24).

While *Jubilees* 23 contains only predictions of the judgment that awaits impious Israelites, the passage's note of finality and the concomitant unanswered prayers of the condemned for deliverance provide interesting parallels to the curses of the *Community Rule*, which deployed the same unanswered-prayer motif to propagate condemnations of those outside and to affirm that no hope remained for them ("May God not be merciful when you entreat him," 1QS 2,8)⁽¹⁶⁾. Its use of election (of which the group is the unique object) as the primary means of identifying the curse's target requires that moral qualifiers play a secondary role in its soteriology and sociology. This sharpest of all possible dualisms, which the curses of the covenant ceremony bring into the present year after year at Qumran, is extremely effective in setting its community over against the rest of contemporary Judaism and giving it a sharply exclusivist self-identity⁽¹⁷⁾.

In the world of Second Temple Judaism it was of course impossible to neglect obedience entirely, and Qumranite reappropriation of Israel's covenants was also driven by the group's self-image as those who had confessed their sin and fulfilled God's law. The link between the group's identity as those who truly forsook sin and followed torah and their prerogative to curse others may have been prompted by Deut 30,7, which promises not only that after confession of sin on the part of Israel God will suspend his curses and restore their fortunes, but also that "YHWH your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on the adversaries who took advantage of you." In light of the contextual emphasis on full repentance in Deut 30,1-2, the Qumran group may have been able to turn these promises regarding divine action into curses they themselves pronounced against others because it "viewed itself as having fulfilled [*sic*] the requirements of confession and was confident of its standing as God's returned exiles. . . . The curses would function to separate members of the covenant from those who

⁽¹⁵⁾ On the eschatological tone of the passage, see G.L. DAVENPORT, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (Studia Post-Biblica; Leiden 1971) 32-35, and note the phrase "In those days. . ." that begins 23,24 and reappears in 23,26.

⁽¹⁶⁾ R.A. WERLINE, "The Curses of the Covenant Renewal Ceremony in 1QS 1.16-2.19 and the Prayers of the Condemned", *For a Later Generation. The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism and Early Christianity* (eds. R.A. ARGALL – B.A. BOW – R.A. WERLINE) (Harrisburg, PA 2000) 280-288.

⁽¹⁷⁾ In an eschatological setting such as that envisioned for the prayers of the condemned here, "if a person is in the group of the wicked to be condemned, no possibility may exist for moving into the group of the blessed, not even by prayer" (WERLINE, "Curses", 288). This further clarifies why a *non-covenantal* blessing was integrated in Qumran's covenant renewal ceremony, something Nitzan tentatively attributed to the group's priestly self-understanding and the order of the covenant renewal ceremony in which the blessing implied the successful bringing of sacrifices for sin (NITZAN, "Benedictions", 264, 271; *Qumran Prayer*, 133-134). While her reasons stand, the election-based blessing and curse, incontrovertible and irreversible from the Qumranites' point of view, are sociologically highly effective boundary markers precisely because they are theologically grounded in the deepest and firmest way possible.

have not undertaken the covenant”⁽¹⁸⁾. Here again the biblical material is modified for sectarian reasons: the replacement of Israel’s “enemies” by the Israelites who had not joined the Dead Sea sect, together with the priestly blessing of only the members of the sect, conclusively settles the contrasting fates of the two groups. The near-usurpation of divine agency in “putting” (נָתַן) the curse on its enemies also sheds light on the group’s self-understanding.

III. The Sectarian Function of Blessing and Cursing at Qumran

Given such a robust sectarian mindset, it is hardly surprising that the Dead Sea sect (in its mature stages as represented in part by 1QS) apparently made no effort to add outsiders to its ranks. 4QMMT, perhaps the only Qumran document whose intended audience lay outside its compound, is quite irenic in tone and generously seeks to bring the non-Qumranite reader (including an “Israel” outside the sect) to a correct understanding and practice of the law (לְטוֹב לָךְ וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל, “for your good and for that of Israel”, 4QMMT C 31-32; cf. C 78-79)⁽¹⁹⁾. But 4QMMT comes from the very beginning of the sect’s existence, and 1QS, coming roughly a century later, prohibits all disputes regarding *halakhah* (the very genre of 4QMMT). Instead it inculcates hatred against all those outside the community: all members are to “detest all the sons of darkness” (with שָׂטָן, 1QS 1,10), and the Instructor is to have “everlasting hatred for the men of the pit in clandestine spirit” (with שָׂטָן, 1QS 9,21-22)⁽²⁰⁾. Whatever openness toward dialogue with those outside the Qumran sect may have existed early in its history soon disappeared and was replaced by practices which consigned those outside it to their fate. The sectarian spectrum described by the Qumranite group thus seems to have begun with irenic disagreements over *halakhah*, progressed to a stage in which these disagreements became sharp enough to create dissension, and matured into an exclusivism which denied salvation (with special emphasis on election, its *sine qua non*) to all those outside the group.

IV. Conclusions

While cursing is not an exhaustive description of the later Qumranite perspective toward outsiders, the preeminence of 1QS and the importance of its covenant ceremony in constructing the group’s identity and ideology demand that its condemnatory stance toward outsiders be reckoned with. The use of Num 6,24-26 as a curse in that ceremony is a valuable avenue toward

⁽¹⁸⁾ As suggested by FALK, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers*, 223.

⁽¹⁹⁾ See further L.L. GRABBE, “4QMMT and Second Temple Jewish Society”, *Legal Texts* (eds. BERNSTEIN – GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – KAMPEN) 89-108.

⁽²⁰⁾ H.W.M. RIETZ – E. QIMRON – J. CHARLESWORTH, “Some Works of the Torah”, *Damascus Document II, Some Works of the Torah, and Related Documents* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project 3; Tübingen – Louisville, KY 2006) date 4QMMT to the middle of the second century B.C.E.

understanding this aspect of the sect's beliefs⁽²¹⁾. With respect to the OT, the community's use of the PB to curse all those outside its carefully-drawn boundaries, even though they were members of the same covenants made with Abraham and at Sinai, is a daring innovation, and the contrast between the two groups is heightened since the Qumranites bless themselves with nearly the same words⁽²²⁾. This reconfiguration of the covenants with Abraham and Israel is a consequence of the sect's understanding that they *alone* were the community with whom God had, in their day, renewed his covenant.

This exceptionally dualistic posture corresponds to the group's apparent lack of interest in those outside once it had severed its links to its Enochic-Essene matrix. Furthermore, the prominence of the curse and the dualistic categories of election and salvation that it uses suggests that the various halakhic and sociological differences between the sect and the rest of Second Temple Judaism are partially eclipsed by the group's summary consigning of their fellow Israelites to "the gloom of everlasting fire" and denying any hope that God would "be merciful" when they entreat him especially because of their non-election (1QS 2,8). Despite occasional appearances of similar soteriological exclusivism elsewhere in early Judaism, the Qumranites' thoroughgoing formulation and implementation of such a posture is unique, and confirms that this era witnessed not a monolithic or common Judaism, but Judaisms, some fully bent on establishing themselves as the only legitimate Judaism.

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SUMMARY

In an attempt to go beyond conventional sociological and anthropological analyses of the religious aspect of the Qumranite sectarian corpus, this article considers the reuse of the Priestly Blessing (PB) of Numbers 6 in the *Community Rule* (1QS). Comparison of how curses were applied elsewhere in Second Temple Judaism informs reflections on what this imaginative redeployment of the PB tells us of the ideology and self-identity of the Qumran group, highlighting their reconfiguration and exclusive appropriation of the covenants with Israel.

⁽²¹⁾ The sociological role of language in forging Qumran's self-identity has been explored recently by C.A. NEWSOM, *The Self as Symbolic Space. Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (STDJ 52; Leiden 2004), R. ARNOLD, *The Social Role of Liturgy, and JOKIRANTA, "Sectarianism" of the Qumran 'Sect'.*

⁽²²⁾ Given the definition of cursing adopted here, we can exclude from consideration the overlapping but not identical phenomena of the *herem*, prophetic oracles of judgment, and the like. Curses against the nations are quite rare in the OT; that in Ps 129, for example, targets "all who hate Zion," a group that includes "not only 'the wicked' but also the Israelites who do not fear the Lord (cf. 125:5)"; W. VANGEMEREN, "Psalms", *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (ed. F. GAEBELEIN) (Grand Rapids, MI 1991) V, 1-880 (799); note also Jdg 5,23; Jer 29,22. All such speech acts should be carefully interpreted in light of the semantic flexibility of labels like "nations", particularly when similar punishments are threatened or enacted against Israel and Judah. Such labels are not ultimately ethnic but spiritual in their semantics.

“And Moses raised his hand” in Numbers 20,11

The most discussed issue of Num 20,1-13 has been the sin of Moses, which remains an enigma for biblical exegetes. Lim has conveniently summarised the sin of Moses under five categories: speech of Moses, misuse of Aaron's staff, surrendering leadership responsibilities, speech during the performance of a miracle and striking of the rock⁽¹⁾. The purpose of this paper is not to evaluate these proposals, but to examine a much neglected phrase “and Moses raised his hand” (וַיָּרִם מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ) (Num 20,11) and its implication for an understanding of the sin of Moses.

A survey of some major commentaries on the book of Numbers shows that commentators hardly pay any attention to the phrase “and Moses raised his hand”, not to mention its relationship to the sin of Moses⁽²⁾. This is perhaps not surprising, because it seems so natural that in order to strike the rock, Moses needs to raise his hand first. Thus, it is hardly necessary to comment on this particular action of Moses. Levine seems to be the only one who takes the trouble to state explicitly in his commentary the relationship between raising one's hand and striking the rock (“Moses raises his staff so as to be able to strike hard”), comparing it with Exod 14,16⁽³⁾. However, Exod 14,16 speaks of raising one's staff (הָרָם אֶת־מִטְּךָ) but not the hand. Moreover, this raising of the staff has nothing to do with any striking action by using the staff. The difference between “to raise his staff” and “to raise his hand” has remained unnoticed.

One may question whether it is necessary for a person to raise his hand before he strikes with his staff. A comparison with Exod 14,1-7, which is often regarded as the duplicate of Num 20,1-13, may provide a first answer to this question. God commanded Moses to strike the rock at Horeb, so that water would come out of it, and Moses did as told (Exod 20,6). In both the description of God's command and Moses' compliance, there is no mention at

⁽¹⁾ J.T.K. LIM, *The Sin of Moses and the Staff of God* (Assen 1997) 116-131. See also a more recent contribution: M. EMMRICH, “The Case against Moses Reopened”, *JETS* 46 (2003) 53-62. Some scholars hold that the text refuses to state the sin of Moses explicitly. See, for example, J.H. SAILHAMER, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI 1992) 75.

⁽²⁾ T.R. ASHLEY, *The Book of Numbers* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 383-385; P.J. BUDD, *Numbers* (WBC 5; Waco, TX 1984) 218; E.W. DAVIES, *Numbers* (NCB; Grand Rapids, MI 1995) 204; G.B. GRAY, *Numbers* (ICC; Edinburgh 1906) 259-264; B.A. LEVINE, *Numbers 1-20* (AB 4; Garden City, NY 1993) 490; J. MILGROM, *Numbers* (JPSTC; Philadelphia, PA 1990) 165, 448-456; M. NOTH, *Das vierte Buch Mose. Numeri* (ATD 7; Göttingen 1966) 126-129; D. OLSON, *Numbers* (Interpretation; Louisville, KY 1996) 124-130; J. SCHARBERT, *Numeri* (NeB 27; Würzburg 1992) 80; L. SCHMIDT, *Das 4. Buch Mose. Numeri. Kapitel 10,11-36,13* (ATD VII/2; Göttingen 2004) 92-93; H. SEEBASS, *Numeri. Kapitel 10,11-22,1* (BKAT IV/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2003) 281; G.J. WENHAM, *Numbers* (TÖTC 4; Leicester 1981) 149-151. Some detailed studies on Num 20 also fail to examine this phrase, see for example, D. FRANKEL, *The Murmuring Stories of the Priestly School* (VTSup 89; Leiden 2000) 263-311. LIM (*Sin*, 137) does remark that this phrase is “very significant” (his italics), but he does not pursue this issue further.

⁽³⁾ LEVINE, *Numbers*, 490.

all of Moses' raising his hand. Even if this action was necessary, it was not stated by God or recorded by the author of the text. If raising one's hand is simply a (necessary) preceding action of striking, it in itself is not worthy recording.

Another text from the book of Exodus may shed more light on the issue. In the first plague against Egypt, God warned Pharaoh that he would strike the water of Nile with the staff in his hand (אֲנֹכִי מַכֶּה בַּמֶּסֶכָה אֲשֶׁר-בְּיָדִי עַל-הַמַּיִם), and the water would be turned to blood (Exod 7,17). God then commanded Aaron through Moses to perform the action. But what Aaron did according to the command of God was וָרֶם בַּמֶּסֶכָה וַיַּךְ אֶת-הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּאֵר (Exod 7,20). Before Aaron struck the water with his staff, he וָרֶם בַּמֶּסֶכָה. Scholars differ as to how to interpret this phrase. Propp suggests that the language is elliptical, and renders it as "he raised (his arm) with the rod"⁽⁴⁾. But Houtman argues that the preposition ב indicates object, and gives the translation "he raised the staff"⁽⁵⁾. What is relevant to our discussion is that in either interpretation, it is the raising of the staff, not Aaron's hand or arm, that is significant to the striking action which comes after. The raising of one's hand is not relevant for the striking.

It is necessary at this point to examine further the terminology employed with respect to the use of both the hand and the staff in other passages in the book of Exodus. Within the plagues narrative, the text repeatedly mentions that Aaron "stretch out" (נִטָּה) his hand (Exod 8,1.13; 9,22) or his staff (Exod 8,12.16; 9,23; 10,13). Within this list of passages, two texts mention the striking of the dust of the earth with the staff (Exod 8,12.13). But in both cases, the word "raise" (רָם) has never been used with either the hand or the staff. Later, when the Israelites are pursued by the Egyptians to the Reed Sea, it is again the stretching out of the hand which makes the sea split apart and return to its normal state (Exod 14,21.26.27). The point of the above discussion is to show that when the text talks about striking with the staff, the preceding action is either the stretching out of the hand or the staff, but never the raising of the hand or the staff. Thus, it is not natural, nor necessary, to make a connection between raising one's hand and striking with the staff in the hand.

When רָם is used with יָד, their combination occurs only in three forms: (1) רָם is a participle with adjectival use modifying יָד (Exod 14,8; Num 15,30; 33,3; Deut 32,27); (2) רָם is a qal form with יָד as the subject (Isa 26,11; Mic 5,8; cf. Ps 89,14); (3) רָם is a hiphil form with יָד as the object (Gen 14,22; 41,44; Exod 17,11; Num 20,11; 1 Kgs 11,26, 27; cf. Dan 12,7). When trying to determine the meaning of the phrase בִּיד רָמָה (the first form), Labuschagne has examined the other two forms as well, although he has not thoroughly dealt with all these occurrences. He argues that the phrase בִּיד רָמָה relates to Israel and not to Yahweh. It refers to "a human posture or attitude" with the "readiness to fight and the will to prevail"⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁴⁾ W.H. PROPP, *Exodus 1-18* (AB 2; Garden City, NY 1999) 325.

⁽⁵⁾ C. HOUTMAN, *Exodus* (HCOOT; Kampen 1996) II, 37-38.

⁽⁶⁾ C.J. LABUSCHAGNE, "The meaning of beyād rāmā in the Old Testament", *Von Kanaan bis Kerala*. FS J.P.M. van der Ploeg (ed. W.S. DELSMAN et al.) (AOAT 211; Kevelaer 1982) 146.

A brief examination of the other occurrences is in order. In Deut 37,27, Israel's enemies may boast that the Israelites were deported and destroyed because "our hands [= enemies' hands] that were high", i.e., "we were strong enough to prevail" over Israel. It is the only occurrence where the dual form of "hand" is used in the combination. In Isa 26,11 the poet complains that the wicked do not know Yahweh's exalted hand, meaning that they do not recognise or acknowledge the power or even the judgement of Yahweh. In Mic 5,8 the author urges that the hand of Yahweh be high so that He could prevail over the enemies. In Gen 14,22 the phrase seems to refer to a gesture of making an oath (by Abraham). In Gen 41,44, Pharaoh decreed that without the permission of Joseph, no one could "raise one's hand or foot", which means that no one could "do anything or go anywhere" except when allowed by Joseph (?). Thus, the phrase itself stresses the freedom of will of the person to do whatever he wants. Exod 17,11 is part of the story of war between the Israelites and Amalekites. Whenever Moses' hand was raised, Israel prevailed over the enemy. It is worthy noting that although Moses is said to have hold his staff in his hand (Exod 17,9), the text does not say that Moses raised his staff, but his hand. This demonstrates again that the two phrases "to raise one's hand" and "to raise one's (hand with one's) staff" are not the same. The phrase "to raise one's staff" is used to emphasize the role of the staff in what happens right after this action (such as striking the river Nile), but not so for the phrase "to raise one's hand". In 1 Kgs 11,26.27, Jeroboam's rebellion against Solomon is expressed by the phrase "he raised his hand against (ב) the king".

Let us briefly summarise the findings. First, when יָד is used with יָד, "hand" is mostly in the singular. Second, the combination is used only twice with God to represent God's power over his enemies (Isa 27,11; Mic 5,8). Third, in the other nine occurrences (excluding Num 20,11) it is used of human beings. With the exception of Gen 14,22 where it probably denotes oath making, the other eight occurrences all underlines the various human subjects' attitude, and their "readiness to fight and the will to prevail", as claimed by Labuschagne regarding the phrase בִּיד רָם. We may add that it is a demonstration of their own power to prevail against a hostile and even superior force, rather than an inferior force that is in view: Israel against Egypt (Exod 14,8; Num 33,3), Israelites against God (Num 15,30), enemies against Israelites (Deut 32,27), Egyptians against Joseph (Gen 41,44), Israel against Amalek (Exod 17,11), and Jeroboam against Solomon (1 Kgs 11,26.27). Fourthly, from the above analysis, it is clear that with the exception of Exod 17,11, the phrase "to raise one's hand" is not to be interpreted literally, but figuratively^(*).

(*) V.P. HAMILTON, *The Book of Genesis*. Chapters 18-50 (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1995) 507. Cf. C. WESTERMANN, *Genesis 37-50* (BKAT I/3; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1982) 99.

(*) In an examination of a similar phrase יָדָם, LUST argues that with persons as the subject, they raise their hands (plural) to pray or to bless, but they raise their hand (singular) to attack (2 Sam 18,28; 20,21). Thus, the phrase יָדָם is also used figuratively when it denotes "to attack". See J. LUST, "For I Lift up My Hand to Heaven and Swear: Deut 32:40", *Studies in Deuteronomy* (FS C.J. Labuschagne) (ed. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ et al.) (VTSup 53; Leiden 1994) 160-161.

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On the basis of above discussion, we may conclude that the phrase “and Moses raised his hand” in Num 20,11 is not to be interpreted literally as referring to a necessary action preceding his striking the rock with his staff, but figuratively as representing his attitude, a demonstration of his own power to fight against a hostile and superior force before him. But what is this superior force that Moses was facing? This could either be God himself or the murmuring Israelites. But in the context of the story, the “enemy” of Moses was probably God himself. This interpretation has an intertextual support from Num 20,24; 27,14. In both passages, God indicted Moses (and Aaron) for being rebelliousness (מרה) against him. When Moses called the Israelites “rebels” (מרים; Num 20,10), God called Moses “rebellious”. In Num 20,12 God rebuked Moses for not trusting in him (לֹא־הֶאֱמַנְתָּ בִּי). Precisely the same accusation from God is directed to the Israelites in the spy narrative (Num 14,11)⁽⁹⁾. Right before this accusation, Caleb urged the people not to “rebel” (מרד) against God (Num 14,9). Thus, by regarding God as an enemy, Moses rebels against God by not following his command to speak to the rock. Although the phrase “and Moses raised his hand” in itself does not explain why Moses has this enmity against God, it at least indicates that Moses is at enmity with God. As such, this constitutes at least part of the sin of Moses.

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SUMMARY

This note argues that the phrase “and Moses raised his hand” in Num 20,11 should be interpreted figuratively and it refers to Moses’ inner attitude and his will to demonstrate his power over God whom he is at enmity with.

⁽⁹⁾ EMMRICH (“Case against Moses”, 57) points out these textual connections and calls this phenomenon “recapitulative historiography”.

Constructing “Janus-Faced” Exhortations. The Use of Old Testament Narratives in Heb 13,1-8⁽¹⁾

I. The Integrity of Heb 13

Were it not for the way in which the anonymous characterisation of the letter to the Hebrews has diverted attention towards questions of authorship, audience and provenance, the relationship of chapter 13 to the rest of the epistle would probably have emerged as the cause célèbre of Hebrews’ scholarship, the question automatically posed once one identifies oneself as a Hebrews’ scholar. The passionate exhortations of the first twelve chapters, imbibed as they are in the once for all sacrificial imagery of Christ the great high priest, have, for many scholars, sat ill with the more earthy, practical, and apparently non-specific claims of 13,1-7⁽²⁾. The authenticity of the chapter has consequently been challenged, traditionally viewed as an afterthought, a separate text, or an appendix, at the very least disconnected to the prior material, or alternatively as a mere jumble of broad exhortations divorced from the actual situation of the community⁽³⁾.

In recent years, however, scholars have argued for the authenticity of, and integral unity to, the chapter and the consensus holds it to be part of the overall letter.⁽⁴⁾ In terms of the exhortations themselves, Vanhoye, in particular, has noted the internal, rhetorical cohesion within Heb 13,1-6 that challenges the notion that they are merely random paraenesis⁽⁵⁾. Others, such as Floyd Filson, have found much to link the chapter with the foregoing sections⁽⁶⁾, and it is now seen less as an embarrassment that has to be compensated for, and rather an important part of the overall letter, with 13,1-6 a key unit linked to the exhortation of 12,28 that demands appropriate worship. Craig Koester even begins the perorative section at 12,28, seeing the citation of Deut 4,24 in Heb 12,29 as closely linked to the ensuing discourse of Heb 13⁽⁷⁾. The exhortations of 13,1-7 therefore become the acts of appropriate worship

⁽¹⁾ An earlier version of this paper was given at the British OT in the NT conference, Hawarden, March 2008. I am grateful for the comments and suggestions received from the attendees.

⁽²⁾ See for example G.W. BUCHANAN, *To the Hebrews*. Translation, Comment and Conclusions (AB 36; Garden City, NY 1972) 267-268, who argues that chapter 13 is an addition, prepared for a different community than that for whom chapters 1-12 were composed.

⁽³⁾ See the discussion in P. ELLINGWORTH, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. A Commentary on the Greek Text (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 692-693.

⁽⁴⁾ For a dissenting view, see A.J.M. WEDDERBURN, “The ‘Letter to the Hebrews’ and its Thirteenth Chapter”, *NTS* 50 (2004) 390-405.

⁽⁵⁾ A. VANHOYE, “La Question Littéraire de Hébreux XIII.1-6”, *NTS* 23 (1976-77) 121-139.

⁽⁶⁾ F.V. FILSON, *Yesterday. A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13* (SBT 2/4; London 1967) 27-81.

⁽⁷⁾ C.R. KOESTER, *Hebrews*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB; New York 2001) 554-555.

demanded by 12,28. Barnabas Lindars likewise finds the chapter reflecting much of the situation of the audience, particularly their “renewed confidence in the value of the Christian liturgy”⁽⁸⁾.

II. The Use of the Old Testament in Heb 13

Whilst the authenticity and integrity of the chapter are now generally upheld, arguments for how such integrity is maintained vary, and it is fair to say that the way in which Heb 13 interacts with, or relates to, the previous chapters remains a matter for ongoing debate⁽⁹⁾. In line with the recent consensus, the claim of this paper upholds the authenticity and integrity of the chapter, but suggests that the association with the prior material, particularly in the first unit of the chapter, is based upon the use of the Old Testament, particularly the extent to which paraenesis is grounded in the actions of Old Testament figures and narratives. Whilst the sentiments echoed in the chapter’s opening verses may reflect contemporary views on community concern (especially 13,1-5), and whilst one may draw out some overriding ethical dimension to the exhortations (such as kinship support or sympathy for those who are marginalised), a more significant unifying feature may be identified, namely that each exhortation is grounded upon the narrative of an OT figure already referred to in the letter. The writer roots his exhortations in the familiar actions of faithful heroes — and one anti-hero — whose behaviour has been similarly exemplary and whose actions provide a suitable prior basis for appeal.

To an extent perhaps, this is not completely new ground. The use of two OT quotations in 13,5-6 point in this direction, and there is already some scholarly recognition of the OT background to these verses. Vanhoye, for example, divides 13,1-6 into three sections, and recognizes in each one the presence of a scriptural allusion or citation (2b, 4b, 5b & 6); such scriptural references are the “motif” or motivation for the exhortation being made⁽¹⁰⁾. This we recognize and affirm, but wish to extend the OT backdrop beyond the examples proffered by Vanhoye and others, and therefore to see a prevailing backdrop of minatory Old Testament exemplars sitting behind the instructions of 13,1-8.

There is good reason for making such an extension. On the one hand, it seems entirely appropriate and characteristic for an author who has rooted pretty much his entire epistolary material in the LXX to continue to do so in the paraenesis of chapter 13. Old habits die hard — in more sense than one, as shall be suggested below. On the other hand, appeal to the exemplary conduct of others is likewise entirely characteristic of paraenetic instruction generally.

⁽⁸⁾ B. LINDARS, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* (Cambridge 1991) 14.

⁽⁹⁾ For KOESTER, *Hebrews*, 554, appropriate worship remains the unifying feature. Others (F.F. BRUCE, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids, MI 1990] 367 and B.F. WESTCOTT, *The Epistle to the Hebrews. The Greek Text with Notes and Essays* [Grand Rapids, MI 1950] 429) suggest that chapter 13 is the customary “end of epistle” exhortatory material.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cf. VANHOYE, “Question”, 124: “Ces citations finales (i.e. 13,5-6) ne viennent donc pas sans préparation”.

Lane opines that “paraenetic instruction ... calls for imitation of qualities of life and conduct exhibited in those who have proved to be models worthy of emulation”⁽¹¹⁾ and, with Hebrews having already found the πίστις of the heroes of chapter 11 somewhat commendatory, their ongoing usefulness for the exhortations of chapter 13 seems perfectly appropriate, apposite and invited. Rather than being isolated, random, convenient examples, (as the consensus seems to imply), the figures appealed to in the opening verses of chapter 13 instead comprise a specific attempt to root present paraenesis in the actions of those who have gone before them. Whilst Hebrews strongly asserts that Christ is the one who models true faithful discipleship (3,1-6; 5,1-10), other figures from the past also exert an ideal function; the fact that Christ cannot fulfil the marriage exhortation of 13,4, for example, gives good reason for suggesting that the author has other exemplary figures in mind.

Part of the argument for this approach is allied to, and invited by, the structure of these opening verses, and the approach of the paper is to consider 13,1-8 as the first unit of discourse. For most commentators, the unit is limited to 13,1-6⁽¹²⁾, or possibly 13,1-7⁽¹³⁾, but 13,1-8 remains a more persuasive unit; the otherwise uninvited liturgical declaration of 13,8 can be best explained when linked to the previous material, especially in the context of the use of the OT⁽¹⁴⁾. Whilst the literary approaches offered by Vanhoye and others hold much weight, and draw some interesting parallels within 13,1-6 itself, another way of considering the evidence is to view 13,1 and 13,8 as bookends of a passage, their common theme of continuity being the theme that binds the whole section together. The desire of 13,1 that love should remain (μένετω) matches the parallel claim of 13,8, that Jesus Christ himself remains the same yesterday, today and forever. This “continuity” or “unshakeability” stands in direct opposition to the changeability expressed at the close of chapter 12 — the created, shaken things (12,26-27). Earlier in the letter, Jesus is said to declare the name of his brothers in the heavenly congregation (2,12), so it should come as no surprise that the continuous exercise of fraternal love (13,1) is connected with Jesus Christ himself.

Including 13,8 within the pericope also yields explanatory power, for the juxtaposition of “yesterday” and “today” summarises the paraenetic concern of the author in the first eight verses of the chapter. The type of discipleship demanded today by Hebrews’ author is the very same type of discipleship as that exhibited by their forefathers yesterday. This same paraenetic principle is, of course, found earlier in the letter, in 3,7-4,11; Hebrews exhorts its audience to faithfulness today (3,7; 4,7), but the model for such πίστις — or rather the negative embodiment of it — is that demonstrated yesterday, by a former generation of Israel (3,16-19; 4,11). Hebrews’ preference is to root its paraenesis in the actions of a group or individuals from the past; this is the

⁽¹¹⁾ W.L. LANE, *Hebrews 9–13* (WBC 47B; Dallas, TX 1991) 499.

⁽¹²⁾ LANE, *Hebrews*, 507-521; H.W. ATTRIDGE, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia, PA 1989) 384-389; D.A. DE SILVA, *Perseverance in Gratitude. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews”* (Grand Rapids, MI 2000) 485-493; R.P. GORDON, *Hebrews* (Sheffield 2000) 162-165.

⁽¹³⁾ L.T. JOHNSON, *Hebrews. A Commentary* (Louisville, KY 2006) 339-346.

⁽¹⁴⁾ N.T. WRIGHT, *Hebrews for Everyone* (London 2003) 167-171 also renders 13,1-8 as the unit of discussion.

overwhelming case in chapters 3-4, 11 and, to a lesser degree, chapters 6 and 12. The discussion below proposes that it likewise extends to chapter 13. Within these bookends of “continuity” (13,1.8) sit desired modes of paraenesis that have prior manifestation in figures from Israel’s past, and specifically those figures who have already formed part of Hebrews’ broader exegetical project. Those already commended for their faithful activity, or used for the articulation of dogmatic principles, are implicitly re-used to shape the paraenesis of 13,2-7. The common “unchanging” or “continuous” focus of the verses (13,1.8) fits well with the content of the inside verses (2-7) which endorse an approach of faithfulness that is unchanging from that demonstrated by the Old Testament faithful.

III. The Use of the Old Testament in Heb 13,1-8

Verse 1 of the chapter, therefore, does not itself invite the application of OT imagery; instead, it is better seen as the bookend of the unit, the parallel to the declaration of Jesus Christ’s immutability in 13,8. Instead, the primary OT focus to the pericope begins with verse 2, which continues the appeal to anthropocentric love with its exhortation to embrace loving of the stranger. Unlike 13,1, however, which contains only the exhortation to sustained, unbroken fraternal love, verse 2 sets forth an exemplar or model for such φιλοξενία. Although not a named allusion, the explanatory force of the γὰρ (13,2) points towards it being a known exemplar, one with which the audience would have been familiar. The appeal to, or reminder of, someone who unknowingly entertained angels is possibly a reminiscence of Tobit⁽¹⁵⁾, but, bearing in mind the raw material of the previous chapters, it is more likely a recollection of the consummate behaviour of the great figure of Abraham. Abraham has been an exemplary figure at frequent points throughout the letter (6,15; 11,8-19) and it makes most sense for such exemplary behaviour to persist here. Ellingworth further notes how the Testament to Abraham particularly “emphasizes Abraham’s hospitality to all”⁽¹⁶⁾, especially the ignorance in regards to Michael, and the verse therefore begins a process of rooting exhortation in the prior behaviour of OT figures.

This process continues into verse 13,3, though here it is more implicit. The ὥς appears twice, but it is used not as a justification or premise for the action, but rather functions adverbially, to articulate the way in which the audience are to deal with those in prison. As such, it is not the basis or motivation for an appeal in the same way as the γὰρ (13,2) makes that connection. Instead, the grounds for the appeal are rooted in the heroic actions of one of Israel’s leaders to whom Hebrews has already greatly referred. The connection is invited linguistically; Moses is lauded for his suffering (συγκρατουχέομαι) with an imprisoned, or enslaved, people (11,25)⁽¹⁷⁾, the same attitude Hebrews’ author demands from his audience (κακουχέω – 13,3). The linguistic similarity is accentuated by the repetition of συν; in both instances, real, substantive identification with an imprisoned people is the

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf. Tob 5,12; so DE SILVA, *Perseverance*, 488.

⁽¹⁶⁾ ELLINGWORTH, *Epistle*, 695.

affirmed *modus operandi*. As such, Moses — like Abraham in the previous verse — lingers in the background as the model of the behaviour demanded by Hebrews’ author⁽¹⁸⁾.

Where 13,1-3 endorses a positive loving attitude towards others, verse 4 adopts a more negative focus, citing the rejection of those who are sexually immoral and therefore the judgement upon fornicators and adulterers. As with verse 13,3, there is no explicit comparative precedent for the action, and the explanatory γὰρ serves only to elucidate the consequences of sexual malpractice. But, as also in 13,3, linguistic factors point towards previous scriptural — or possibly haggadic⁽¹⁹⁾ — testimony. The letter’s prior appeal to πόρνος is found within the portrayal of Esau in 12,16. In this earlier manifestation, the author’s concerns are ultimately spiritual, rather than physical, fornication, but Esau’s sexual malpractice remains the premise upon which such “spiritual” arguments are made. If such linguistic association holds, Esau’s promiscuous behaviour echoes within 13,4, and he continues the parade of OT exemplars, but provides — as in 12,16-17 — a negative manifestation of the desired behaviour. As this is the one exhortation that warns of the consequences of not carrying out the ethical behaviour, the introduction of a negative exemplar seems to be both permissible and invited.

The exhortation against love of money in 13,5 is perhaps the hardest exhortation to fit within this grid. A precise OT example of a figure seeking after riches — or someone specifically eschewing them — is difficult to locate within Hebrews’ prior retelling of OT narratives. Some caution is therefore necessary, and tempers any over-enthusiasm for our proposal. A couple of tentative possibilities, however, might still be proposed. It is possible to see 13,5 as articulating a concept of not seeking after rewards, particularly in this life, therefore being happy with what one has on earth. As such, the figure of Enoch may be once more in the author’s mind; he pleased God (11,5) just by being faithful — he was happy, so to speak, with his lot. Alternatively, and perhaps more persuasively, the implied referent is once again Moses, the one who eschewed Egyptian treasures (11,26) in favour of following Christ, knowing that his real “reward” lay in the future. Monetarily speaking, Moses was content with what he had, and so, in Hebrews’ portrayal of him at least, he provides a suitable minatory example for the exhortation of 13,5.

The rest of verse 5 is more straightforward. The text continues with a quotation whose precise orientation is contested, but whose covenantal context and prior association with Joshua remain undisputed. The provenance may be any, some, or all of Deut 31,6, 31,8 or Josh 1,5⁽²⁰⁾, but in each instance the utterance is given to Joshua at the threshold of entry into the land of

⁽¹⁷⁾ Such empathy is — in both cases — with those who are being mistreated because of imprisonment, or denial of freedom. Although Moses’ empathy is said only to be with his fellow people (11,25), it remains a fellow people who were enslaved or imprisoned by a foreign power.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Another mooted OT backdrop to Heb 13,3 is 1 Kgs 2,26, though this is unlikely as the Samuel-Kings narratives are generally of little interest to Hebrews otherwise.

⁽¹⁹⁾ The appeal of 12,16 is generally ascribed to haggadic traditions of Esau; see the references in ATTRIDGE, *Epistle*, 368-369.

⁽²⁰⁾ A version of the phrase also occurs in relation to Jacob (Gen 28,15), consistent with this covenant-making context.

Canaan. The connection with another Ἰησοῦς enhances the strength of the exhortation, particularly as the later Ἰησοῦς is the exemplar *par excellence*, and such citational usage also sets the scene for Hebrews' prevailing situation just "outside the land", awaiting the entry into the goal of their journey⁽²¹⁾. Implicit in this citation then is the exhortation to ongoing faithfulness in the audience's pilgrimage journey as they imminently receive the goal of their salvation.

13,6 offers a further quotation, this time taken from Ps 118,6. As with the reference to love of money in verse 5, the referent of the verse is not obvious, but nonetheless, it is quite possible that either, or both, of Abraham and Moses linger in the background of the quotation. The citation of the Psalm reads "The Lord is my helper", and, it is notable that the letter's prior reference to helping is in relation to Abraham's descendants (2,18), with Jesus Christ the high priest the agent of such help. Alternatively, the second Psalmic clause ("I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?") may allude to Hebrews prior description of Moses as not fearing the Egyptian king's anger (11,27) and enduring abuse, aware that greater rewards lay ahead (11,26). Specificity may not be possible, but both Abraham and Moses once again loom in the background of the citation.

The question of course remains as to whether this is just a matter of pure coincidence or happy, but ill-founded, scholarly conjecture? What, if anything, concretely signals the association to those prior heroes, particularly where the reference is at best implicit? Two observations may be made. First, it is evident from chapter 11 that such figures have some form of exemplary value in the author's eyes, so they would be the natural "raw material" for further hortatory discourse. Second, the exhortations to remember (13,3, 13,7), and correspondingly not to forget (ἐπιλανθάνομαι [13,2] is to be understood in this sense)⁽²²⁾, position the hearers in a context of rooting present and future behaviour in the basis of that of the past. The appeal to memory is not just an appeal to recollection of their own experience, but an appeal also to remember a familiar story or stories.

The proof of the pudding is best found in v. 7. It is here that the background recollection of OT heroes reaches its climax and it is for this reason that v. 7 sits within the previous discourse, rather than just solely starting its own one. The author exhorts his audience to remember their leaders, to consider their way of life and imitate their faith. Whilst some actual known leaders of the community are primarily here in view, the language of 13,7 resonates in other directions as well. Such appeal to faith/faithfulness (πίστις) harks back to the *Beispielreihen* of chapter 11 and their laudatory πίστις, especially as 13,7 seems to imply those leaders who have already passed away⁽²³⁾. Where Israel's heroes outworked faithfulness in previous generations, so the audience must now similarly follow their example. Johnson hears the echo of the saints in 13,7 and comments: "In effect, then,

⁽²¹⁾ See D.M. ALLEN, *Deuteronomy and Exhortation in Hebrews*. An Exercise in Narrative Re-presentation (WUNT 2/238; Tübingen 2008) 195-198; M. THEISSEN, "Hebrews and the End of Exodus," *NovT* 49 (2007) 353-369.

⁽²²⁾ JOHNSON, *Hebrews*, 339.

⁽²³⁾ KOESTER, *Hebrews*, 559.

these leaders of the past offer to the hearers a continuation of the roll call of faith they had heard in chapter 11. They not only 'spoke the word of God' but enacted it through their faithful way of life"⁽²⁴⁾. This echo back to chapter 11 is also enhanced by the author's choice of language, ἔκβασις (13,7) perhaps evoking further memories of the triumph of the exodus narrative⁽²⁵⁾.

It is also worth stressing that the trajectory of 11,1–12,2 is replicated in 13,7–8. In the great faith discourse, Christ, the author and perfecter of faith, comes at the climax of the parade of heroes, the true witness *par excellence*. The same approach comes forth in chapter 13; Jesus Christ is, in Hebrews, the consummate heroic leader, and his succession to verse 7 comes as no surprise. Although leaders fade away, Jesus Christ does not. He remains (cf. 13,1), he is faithful over God's house (3,6). The transition then from 13,7 to 13,8 is therefore less abrupt than many have otherwise suggested.

At the risk of circular thinking, once the minatory role of the OT heroes is understood, verses 1–8 seem the most logical unit under discussion; the pattern of chapter 11 of heroic behaviour whose ultimate manifestation is found in Jesus Christ, is replicated in chapter 13,1–8. The laudatory exhortations, premised upon the actions of those who have gone before them in Israel's story, and is found in their own leaders (13,7), reaches its climax in 13,8, with Jesus, the one who is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The rhetorical pattern is common to both discourses.

IV. Conclusions

What can one say in conclusion? Is there some bigger rhetorical framework operational within this pericope? Our analysis of this fairly consistent use of OT figures as implicit characters within the discourse testifies to an ongoing structure premised upon recollection of OT narratives. One might draw out several conclusions:

1) There does seem to be a continued use of OT figures and narratives as the basis for ethical instruction. Though not limited to this, the shared narrative is primarily between the familiar texts of Heb 11 and Heb 13; just as the heroes of chapter 11 are commended for their faithfulness, so the audience are similarly exhorted to that same commendable faithfulness in the knowledge that the heroes were able to demonstrate that kind of model, faithful behaviour. This may perhaps explain why the exhortations of chapter 13 have often been dismissed as being so "unrevolutionary" or lacking innovation; Pamela Eisenbaum notes, for example, that "Hebrews does not appear interested in defining or scripting Christian behaviour. It is certainly not designed to introduce Christians to new rules of behaviour"⁽²⁶⁾. The

⁽²⁴⁾ JOHNSON, *Hebrews*, 345; see also KOESTER, *Hebrews*, 559: "the listeners are to imitate these leaders, just as they are to imitate Abraham, who was not a martyr (6,12)".

⁽²⁵⁾ See THEISSEN, "Hebrews," 355–360 for the view that Hebrews retells Israel's history as a prolonged exodus narrative terminated by the Christ event.

⁽²⁶⁾ P. EISENBAUM, "The Virtue of Suffering, the Necessity of Discipline, and the Pursuit of Perfection in Hebrews", *Asceticism and the New Testament* (eds. L.E. VAAGE – V.L. WIMBUSH) (London 1999) 332.

reason for such a lack of novelty is precisely their prior manifestation in Israel's metanarrative — or at least in Hebrews' retelling of it.

2) On the basis of such continued usage, the exhortations of chapter 13 cease to be dislocated from what has gone before, but rather build upon, or work with, the OT imagery that pervades chapters 1–12. Hebrews 13,1–8 provide a further development in the overall epistolary argument, sharing the foregoing technique of rooting paraenesis in the narratives of Israel. The life of faithfulness portrayed in 13,1–8 is premised upon the life of faithfulness depicted in chapter 11; the parade of heroes is the raw material that allows the writer to speculate on these otherwise random exhortations. The context for the audience's faithfulness may have changed under the new covenant dispensation, but the core mode, or framework in which the faithfulness is exhibited remains constant, and premised upon a model given earlier on in the letter. This is consistent with the letter's paraenetic material elsewhere in the letter, namely that Hebrews' paraenesis remains essentially unchanged from the old covenant dispensation⁽²⁷⁾, and this continuity persists in 13,1–8. The exhortations are commensurate with Hebrews' overall hortatory program of exhortation to faithfulness, a model of faithfulness ultimately fulfilled in Christ, but which also has prior exemplary manifestation in the heroes who have gone before.

3) Within this mode of continuity, there is also a simultaneous reversal or mirroring of the use of the OT in the prior sections of the book. The bulk of the letter (i.e. Hebrews 1–12) casts the OT protagonists as looking forward to perfection under Christ; the Christ event sees the fulfilment of Israel's roll call of heroes, with the trajectory of Israel's narrative heading forwards towards the Christ event (11,39–12,2). Chronologically, so to speak, the old covenant makes way for the new (8,6–13). Hebrews 13,1–8, on the other hand, exhorts its readers to look backwards and learn from the model (or otherwise) behaviour of these same OT figures. The text therefore adopts a quasi-“Janus faced” approach to the OT figures; whilst they look forward to Christ, the audience are to look backwards to them.

4) A word on methodology is perhaps invited. In terms of OT in the NT discourse, the connections we have identified are narrational, rather than textual, with appeal made to the imagery of the story rather than specific word plays or verbal citations. Questions then of authorial intent need to be thought through; the interchange with the OT by Hebrews is as much premised upon his own usage of the LXX as on the LXX itself. What we have here then, we venture, is a slightly different take on the OT in the NT debate. It differs therefore from the classic mode of the discipline, offering a third stage — one might call it Hebrews' (later) use of Hebrews' use of the OT. Interpretation comes from Hebrews' own use — or perhaps re-use — of how it has already portrayed such figures; the usage is secondary, rather than primary. Appeal is made to the author's own (prior) depiction of the individual, rather than merely to how the OT records them (the characteristic portrayals of Moses and Esau being cases in point).

⁽²⁷⁾ See ALLEN, *Deuteronomy*, 224–225.

Hebrews’ parade of heroes, however unperfected (11,39-40), continue to live by faith beyond the confines of the eleventh chapter of the epistle. As they look forward to Christ, Hebrews’ audience look backwards to them, not just as models of faithfulness, but also as practical exemplars of contemporary ethics and behaviour. Israel’s narrative remains as important to Hebrews in the opening verses of chapter 13 as they do in the preceding twelve.

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SUMMARY

Whilst the scholarly consensus now concurs that Hebrews 13 forms part of the original text, the way in which it interacts with, or relates to, the previous chapters, remains a matter for debate. This paper establishes the relationship in terms of the use of the OT, particularly the way in which Hebrews 13 appropriates narratives from OT figures already discussed in chapters 1–12, thereby (re-)using them for its ethical discourse. Where the bulk of the letter (i.e. Hebrews 1–12) casts the OT protagonists as looking forwards to perfection under Christ, Heb 13,1-8 exhorts its readers to look backwards and learn from the model (or otherwise) behaviour of these same OT figures.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Andrea L. WEISS, *Figurative Language in Biblical Prose Narrative. Metaphor in the Book of Samuel* (VTS 107). Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2006. xii-252 p. 16 × 24,5. €95 – \$136

This book, a revised University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis directed by Jeffrey Tigay, Adele Berlin, Asif Agha, and David Stern, both is, and is not, what its title suggests. It neither deals with all biblical prose, and sometimes even touches on poetry. Nor does it cover all of the Book of Samuel; its focus instead is on selected examples of figurative imagery from the end of 1 Samuel. Yet, in the clear way it outlines what figurative language is and how it should be understood, it really does clarify the meaning of the language of all of Samuel, most biblical prose texts, and beyond.

The clarity of the book is admirable. It is impossible to deal with metaphor in a serious fashion without reading, digesting, comparing, and simplifying for the non-specialist a wide variety of studies from linguistics and philosophy. Unlike many other biblical scholars who deal with metaphor and other types of figurative language, Weiss has done this, and even more, has made original contributions to the field of the theory of metaphor by illustrating problems with some of the current standard theories.

This book is well-structured, beginning with “An Introduction to the Study of Metaphor” (1-34) that is broader than many comparable studies. Like many scholars of metaphor, she starts with Aristotle, but she also includes important examples of how traditional Jews, Christians and Moslems understood metaphor in relation to their scriptures. Weiss follows this with a long and detailed discussion of “Identification of Biblical Metaphors: The Anomalous Aspect of Metaphor” (35-84), where she uses examples from 1 Samuel 25 (the story about David and Abigail) to suggest that “semantic incongruity” is a central feature for isolating metaphors (26). As a model teacher, she explains this concept of “semantic incongruity” with simple English examples before moving on to biblical ones. Her illustrations are all clear and compelling, though she might have been more explicit about why she chose particular examples in a specific order, and what points each example illustrates.

The following chapter, “Identification and Interpretation of Biblical Metaphors: Analyzing the Analogy Inherent in Metaphor” (85-120) follows and develops the study of the philosopher Roger White, *The Structure of Metaphor* (Oxford 1996), who has worked out a clear method connected to analogy that helps understand what particular metaphors mean. For example,

she explains 1 Sam 25:14, וַיִּעַם בָּהֶם, “He swooped down on them” by contrasting what she calls the “Actual situation: Nabal acts harshly toward David’s messengers” with the “Hypothetical situation: A raptor swoops down upon an object”. The first sentence has the “Primary vocabulary: He x them.” The second has secondary vocabulary: “Y swooped down on z.” (93). In this method, these two sentences and the implications of their vocabulary are further linked and explored to explain how and where the analogy implicit in the metaphor functions. Though this method takes some getting used to, it is helpful, and Weiss also retains the well-known perspective of the philosopher Max Black, and talks about “associated commonplaces” as she explores how metaphors mean.

Chapter four, which is too short, looks at “The Effect of Metaphor” (121-132). She suggests discusses the “conceptual economy” of metaphor, how metaphors “paint a graphic memorable image that engages the audience’s imagination and attention” (131) and “color the hearer’s perception” (132). Given that many readers of the Bible are literalists, and do not have a deep understanding of poetry and its effects, this section might have been more robust and extensive, though in a sense the intricately worked examples in the following chapter serve as an eloquent explanation of the power of metaphors. The final two chapters, “Metaphor and Other Tropes” (133-182) and “A Reevaluation of the Concept of ‘Dead’ Metaphors” (183-215) overturn in a compelling fashion certain ideas that many interpreters in biblical studies and other disciplines hold dear. For example, rather than making a clear, broad distinction between how metaphor, simile, and metonymy function, she notes that this must be done on a case-by-case basis. This is in contrast to the recent book by David H. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics and Divine Imagery* (Leiden 2001), which gets lost in a technical discussion of exactly what is metaphorical and what is not, but does not devote enough space to why this matters. She also discusses the problems of the term “dead metaphor” and shows how many metaphors that exegetes have ignored as “dead” function in the text. This too has important implications for textual interpreters, especially when she suggests reasonable, non-technical criteria for how we might determine whether a metaphor is dead or alive.

The brief “Conclusions” (217-224) summarize certain aspects of her approach, for example the notion that a metaphor should not be looked at in terms of one or two words, but in terms of a broader contextual and textual context—she calls this a “text-based approach to figurative language” (224). She also notes, correctly to my mind, that we must not get bogged down in definitions that don’t really matter; instead “[m]ore important than the label given to an utterance is the investigation of how the utterance operates in a specific literary context and the exegetical outcomes of that interpretive process” (223). (Contrast *Biblical Ambiguities* by David Aaron, cited above). As “Conclusions” should, she moves beyond summarizing, noting, for example, how her approach supports more literal Bible translations rather than those that use functional equivalences to unpack a metaphor’s meaning in an unambiguous, defanged form (217-219). The “Conclusions” are followed by a “Bibliography” and three indices, of scriptures, subjects, and

authors. The latter two are especially detailed and elaborate, and Weiss should be applauded for taking the effort to compile these in detail in an era when many publishers and authors are omitting altogether subject indices, making their works much less useful.

In sum, this is a wonderful book by a scholar who is clearly very sensitive to how literary texts should be read. Different readers will appreciate different parts. For those interested in metaphors and biblical texts, the first half is more significant; for those interested in biblical interpretation, or the meaning of Samuel, the second half, with its carefully worked texts, will be most important. Anyone who works through her examples in conjunction with the biblical text will be enriched by better understanding particular biblical texts, by understanding Samuel better, and ultimately by seeing in detail a clear model of how biblical texts ought to be read.

Of course, as in any book, I do not agree with every word and illustration. For example, I am not as certain as Weiss (197) that the expression concerning cutting כנף המעיל in 1 Samuel 24 has no figurative value. She suggests that it produces no tropic effect because elsewhere in the passage the image of Saul as a bird is absent. Yet, given the predominance of biblical images of flying like a bird, which represent freedom (see e.g. Isa 40,31; Ps 55,7), the specific choice of bird imagery may suggest that Saul has been “de-winged”, that is he has further lost his freedom, an idea that the following chapters support. I agree with Weiss that the important question is not whether an expression is a simile, metaphor, metonymy, dead or alive, but whether “the expression produce[s] a tropic effect in this particular context?” However, in determining this, she concentrates solely on whether the use of bird imagery in the pericope activates the metaphor; I think it is also relevant to see if the potential meaning of the metaphor, rather than its specific words, might also activate it, and suggest that it is a trope.

In any case, this is a clear, state-of-the-art discussion of defining and isolating metaphors, a crucial issue for much biblical interpretation, and it develops coherent, wonderful, extended illustrations of the benefits of understanding biblical figurative language in a sophisticated fashion. Unlike many books that deal with literary aspects of the Bible, it is neither obvious nor abstruse and more technical than necessary. Anyone who completes it will never speak of a “mere metaphor” again, even in prose texts.

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David WAGNER, *Geist und Tora*. Studien zur göttlichen Legitimation und Delegitimation von Herrschaft im Alten Testament anhand der Erzählungen über König Saul (Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 15), Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2005, 480 p. 15,5 × 23. €68.00

Cet ouvrage est une version légèrement modifiée de la thèse doctorale présentée par l'auteur en 2004 à l'Université de Leipzig, sous la direction de Rüdiger Lux. Il comporte deux parties principales et une conclusion. La première partie (15-253) propose la lecture des péripécies du premier livre de Samuel qui établissent la légitimité de la royauté de Saül (chap. 8-12) et de celles qui racontent comment et pourquoi le souverain a perdu cette même légitimité (13,7b-15; 15; 16,14-23; 18,6-16; 28,3-25). Chaque texte fait l'objet de deux enquêtes successives: une lecture synchronique plus proche de la *Close Reading* que de l'analyse narrative, puis une analyse de son histoire littéraire. Cette seconde enquête aboutit à un résultat très simple: les livres de Samuel seraient l'œuvre d'un auteur du début de la période perse (V^{Sam}), qui aurait cependant utilisé des sources de l'époque royale; cette œuvre aurait, à son tour, été enrichie par quelques rares additions. La seconde partie (254-383) est intitulée «Contextualisation historique». Elle commence par proposer un tableau systématique des idéologies royales mésopotamienne, égyptienne, cananéenne/ougaritique et perse; elle les compare aux textes relatifs à Saül. Alors que les différences avec les premières sont marquantes, il y a convergence essentielle avec des textes et des images perses, et en particulier avec le cylindre de Cyrus découvert à Babylone. Cette constatation semble confirmer la datation de V^{Sam} proposée plus haut. Ce document — limité aux livres de Samuel, longtemps indépendants — aurait vu le jour au troisième tiers du VI^e siècle, dans le contexte des débats sur le rétablissement de la monarchie déjà annoncé par Jérémie (23,5-6, en particulier) et des espoirs suscités par Zorobabel. L'auteur appartiendrait à un groupe laïc issu de la déportation et influencé par la théologie deutéronomiste (381). La conclusion du livre (385-404) ne se contente pas d'en résumer la démarche et les résultats: elle montre aussi comment la problématique de V^{Sam} a été prolongée dans des textes bibliques plus récents (Ps 51; 1 Ch 10) et comment elle soulève des questions théologiques toujours actuelles. Après cette conclusion figurent encore une liste des abréviations (405), une bibliographie (406-424; tous les titres sont en anglais ou en allemand, à une seule exception près), un index sélectif des références bibliques (425-427), une traduction des textes de 1 S étudiés, avec une typographie permettant d'y distinguer les strates littéraires 429-445) et enfin une série d'illustrations (446-452).

Le centre de gravité de l'ouvrage réside dans une thèse qui peut s'énoncer simplement: l'auteur principal des livres de Samuel (V^{Sam}) a écrit son œuvre au début de la période perse, dans le contexte de l'espérance d'une nouvelle monarchie judéenne. L'histoire de Saül montrerait à la fois ce que la royauté doit être aux yeux de YHWH (textes de légitimation) et ce qu'elle ne peut pas être (récits de délégitimation). Cette thèse originale et séduisante fait appel non seulement à la lecture attentive des textes bibliques, mais aussi à une vaste documentation littéraire et iconographique extra-biblique, ainsi qu'aux

études actuelles sur l'histoire de Yehud aux alentours de l'an 500. Elle mérite assurément d'être prise au sérieux, et d'autant plus que l'auteur est héritier de la méticulosité de l'exégèse allemande. J'ai cependant la conviction que la thèse du livre repose sur des bases discutables.

Un premier problème concerne la base textuelle de la théorie sur la formation des livres de Samuel. Limiter l'enquête à quelques péripécies seulement était sans doute imposé par une nécessité pratique. En bonne méthode, cependant, il aurait fallu prendre en considération les livres de Samuel dans leur intégralité ou, à tout le moins, l'ensemble qui s'étend de 1 S 8 au double récit de la mort de Saül (1 S 31 et 2 S 1). Un point, en effet, paraît crucial dans la démonstration de Wagner : établir que «son» V^{Sam} est bien l'auteur principal du livre. Pour cela, il aurait fallu montrer l'impossibilité ou la non-vraisemblance d'un autre modèle: l'existence d'un document cohérent à l'époque monarchique, retravaillé ensuite au temps de la déportation babylonienne et — éventuellement — à l'époque perse. Ce modèle, qui connaît plusieurs variantes, domine l'histoire de l'exégèse depuis plusieurs générations, et on ne peut l'écarter sans considérer tout le dossier. Sans doute est-il impossible de reconstituer une histoire de Saül indépendante, mais ne faut-il pas compter avec un récit ancien montrant comment la maison de David a supplanté celle de Saül, pour établir la légitimité de la première? Et ne faut-il pas distinguer parmi les éléments qui complètent ce récit ceux qui semblent avoir pour fonction de préparer le lecteur à l'avènement de Salomon (choix divin du candidat le plus inattendu ou du plus jeune, importance décisive de l'onction royale et de l'acclamation populaire, etc.) et ceux qui fournissent plutôt une réflexion théologique sur la royauté et sur l'exercice concret du pouvoir?

La *Literarkritik* des péripécies étudiées pose également question. J'ai le sentiment que Wagner minimise les tensions qui traversent les textes et en simplifie abusivement l'histoire littéraire. Prenons un seul exemple: celui de 1 S 15. Ce chapitre formerait un ensemble cohérent, à la seule exception du v. 29 (glose), tandis que les vv. 22b-23a et 33a* citeraient des paroles de la tradition prophétique (172-175); les répétitions feraient partie du style de l'auteur et ne seraient pas l'indice d'une histoire littéraire du texte. Cette solution me semble discutable, et il aurait à tout le moins fallu entrer dans une vraie discussion avec l'étude très fouillée de F. Foresti, *The Rejection of Saul in the Perspective of the Deuteronomistic School. A Study of 1 Sam 15 and Related Texts* (Roma 1984). En effet, les «répétitions» vont de paire avec des points de vue différents. Le v. 15, par exemple, paraît juxtaposer deux présentations concurrentes du péché de Saül. Aux vv. 9 et 19, le roi épargne le meilleur bétail et viole ainsi l'anathème. Les vv. 20-21 et le texte actuel du v. 15 donnent une autre explication, plus subtile: Saül a voulu réserver certains animaux pour les offrir en sacrifice; ces versets opposent culte et obéissance à YHWH dans la vie ordinaire, problématique que rien n'annonçait dans ce qui précède et qui paraît donc avec été introduite par un rédacteur secondaire. Quoi qu'il en soit, l'excuse de Saül ne vaut pas pour le roi Agag, seul être humain épargné (v. 9); ce cas n'était d'ailleurs pas prévu dans les instructions données au v. 3, et Samuel ne fait pas de reproche sur ce point (vv. 16-19); en dehors du v. 20 (secondaire), Agag ne réapparaîtra dans le récit que pour son exécution des mains de Samuel (vv. 32-33), épisode qui

vient mal à propos après la réconciliation entre le prophète et le roi. Il faut donc compter avec trois présentations différentes de la faute de Saül: il a violé l'anathème en épargnant des animaux, il a préféré les sacrifices à l'obéissance, il a épargné le roi d'un peuple païen de la terre d'Israël.

L'attribution de nombreux textes au même rédacteur V^{Sam} me paraît trop rapide et souvent peu fondée. Par exemple, Wagner assigne au même auteur à la fois 1 S 8, qui marque plus d'une réticence à l'égard de la monarchie, liée à un rejet de la royauté divine (v. 6), et la section 10,26–11,13, où l'on voit l'Esprit de YHWH fondre sur Saül et lui donner la victoire qui fera de lui le roi. La divergence des points de vue est flagrante! A l'appui de sa proposition, Wagner ne donne que deux arguments assez faibles (101). Tout d'abord, les Anciens interviennent dans les deux épisodes, mais il s'agit ici des «Anciens d'Israël» (8,4) et là des «Anciens de Yabesh» (11,3). D'autre part, lorsque le peuple demande à Samuel la mort des ennemis de Saül (11,12), il manifeste le même intérêt pour la royauté qu'au chap. 8, mais peut-on tenir pareille «convergence» pour significative? Les différences sont bien plus importantes. Les textes que Wagner attribue à V^{Sam} ont par rapport à la monarchie trois discours contradictoires: les uns y paraissent inconditionnellement favorables (11,1-11, par exemple), d'autres en condamnent le principe même (8,7b-8,11-18; 10,18-19; 12,7-13a) et d'autres encore la soumettent à des conditions (ainsi, 12,23-25, mais aussi les épisodes où Saül est condamné à cause de sa conduite).

Le dossier proche-oriental est bien mené, et le rapprochement entre l'idéologie royale de 1 S et celle du cylindre de Cyrus, en particulier, ne manque pas d'intérêt. Il est vrai que les textes perses distinguent plus nettement le roi du monde divin que les textes mésopotamiens et égyptiens, et que cette caractéristique les rapproche de l'histoire de Saül. Cette constatation invite-t-elle à dater les textes bibliques étudiés au début de l'époque perse? Je ne le pense pas. Au VIII^e siècle déjà, les prophètes Amos, Osée, Isaïe et Michée ont tenu à l'égard des rois de leur temps un discours critique, qui a été ensuite repris par Jérémie et par l'école deutéronomiste; d'autres textes, cependant, parlent de filiation divine (Ps 2 et 110). Cela montre qu'il y avait en Juda un débat sur la monarchie dès l'époque royale, et les propos des livres de Samuel relèvent sans doute d'une réflexion intra-israélite beaucoup plus que d'une influence étrangère. D'ailleurs le cylindre de Cyrus glorifie le roi perse, mais il est l'œuvre de prêtres babyloniens, qui reprennent des éléments idéologiques de leur propre culture.

La nomination du davidide Zorobabel comme gouverneur de Yehud a suscité dans certains milieux l'espoir d'une restauration de la monarchie, mais cette perspective n'était pas reçue par tous de la même manière. En d'autres termes, le dernier tiers du VI^e siècle a vu le développement de débats sur la royauté, et l'édition d'une histoire des commencements de la monarchie israélite n'a rien d'in vraisemblable dans ce contexte. Cependant l'œuvre de V^{Sam} telle que Wagner la reconstitue ne me paraît pas livrer un message suffisamment clair pour convenir à la propagande efficace d'un camp ou d'un autre. D'autre part, les textes qui établissent la légitimité ou la délégitimisation de Saül n'ont ni affinités idéologiques ni parenté lexicale avec les livres d'Aggée et de Za 1–8. Quant à Zorobabel, on n'en sait presque rien, en dehors de son activité de bâtisseur du second Temple: les textes ne

parlent à son sujet ni d'un charisme spécial (don de l'Esprit), ni d'une faute qu'il aurait commise, ni d'une condition à son éventuel pouvoir royal. La répartition du pouvoir entre un leader politique (Zorobabel) et un prêtre (Josué) peut être rapprochée du face-à-face entre Saül et Samuel (cf. 1 S 13,7b-15, en particulier), mais aucun texte ne suggère un même rapport de dépendance (Samuel dit au roi les décisions divines).

L'essai de David Wagner propose une hypothèse de lecture intéressante et originale de l'histoire de Saül. L'exposé est clair et fouillé. La lecture synchronique des textes est de bonne facture, et elle est d'autant plus importante que tout le texte est attribué — en dehors de quelques gloses — au même rédacteur. Quant à l'explication historique, elle me semble beaucoup plus discutable.

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R.E. GANE, *Cult and Character*. Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy, Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 2005. XXI-394. 15,5 × 23,5. \$39,50.

Il volume si inserisce nella fioritura di opere riguardanti il Levitico registrata negli ultimi decenni del secolo scorso e che è continuata nei primi anni del XXI secolo. Per citare soltanto le opere pubblicate dopo il 1990 si possono registrare almeno otto commentari completi (J. Milgrom, *Leviticus*, I-III [AB 3; New York 1991-2001]; J.E. Hartley, *Leviticus* [WBC 4; Dallas 1992]; E.S. Gerstenberger, *Das dritte Buch Mose: Leviticus* [ATD 6; Göttingen 1993]; G.F.H. Gorman, *Divine Presence and Community. A Commentary on the Book of Leviticus* [ITC; Grand Rapids 1997]; P. J. Budd, *Leviticus* [NCBC; Grand Rapids 1996]; T. Staubly, *Die Bücher Levitikus, Numeri* [NSKAT 3; Stuttgart 1996]; G.J. Wehnam, *The Book of Leviticus* [NICOT; Grand Rapids 1992]; G. Deiana, *Levitico* [I libri biblici 3; Milano 2005]); a questi si può aggiungere l'opera più snella di J. Milgrom, *Leviticus. A Book of Ritual and Ethics* (Continental Commentaries; Minneapolis 2004) e i commenti parziali di R. Péter Contesse, *Lévitique 1-16* (CAT 3; Genève 1993); R. Rendtorff, *Leviticus 1,1-10,20* (BKAT III,1; Neukirchen 2004); D. Luciani, *Sainteté et pardon. I. Structure littéraire du Levitique. II. Guide Technique* (BETL CLXXXVII; Leuven 2005) con quasi cento pagine di bibliografia; ma molto probabilmente l'elenco non è completo. Gli studi parziali su questioni specifiche del libro sono così numerosi che è praticamente impossibile ricordarli tutti; specialmente Lv 16, nel quale si trovano codificate le norme relative al *kippur*, è stato oggetto di specifiche monografie (G. Deiana, *Il giorno dell'espiazione: Il kippur nella tradizione biblica* [RivBSupp 30; Bologna 1995]; B. Jürgens, *Heiligkeit und Versöhnung. Levitikus 16 in seinem literarischen Kontext*

[HBS 28; Freiburg, Basel 2001]). Il volume di G. si aggiunge alla bibliografia segnalata in precedenza, con l'ulteriore precisazione che esso fu preceduto da un altro corposo lavoro del medesimo autore (*Ritual Dynamic Structure* [Gorgias Dissertations 14. Religion. 2; New York 2004]) che più direttamente tratta il significato del rito. L'opera in recensione si compone di quattro parti suddivise in diciassette capitoli ai quali segue una breve conclusione. Un indice degli autori e dei passi biblici citati chiudono l'opera. Prima di presentare le mie osservazioni ad alcuni punti specifici, cerco di offrire una panoramica del contenuto dell'opera di G. Il primo capitolo può essere considerato introduttivo in quanto l'autore vuole preliminarmente definire che cosa intende per "rito" di cui offre una propria definizione (15): "Il rito è un sistema particolare di azioni che si ritiene possa attuare un processo di trasformazione che comporta un'interazione con una realtà normalmente inaccessibile alla sfera materiale".

Il capitolo secondo applica la definizione di rito allo studio del sacrificio definito *hî't*, la cui descrizione più importante si trova in Lv 4 e 16. G. rifiuta tutti i tentativi di ricostruire l'evoluzione letteraria dei due capitoli e si propone di cogliere il senso dei due riti dal testo biblico *ut iacet*. Si tratta quindi di uno studio sincronico (36) che però non gli impedisce di schierarsi con le posizioni di Milgrom il quale colloca i testi sacerdotali (P) nel periodo pre-esilico (J. Milgrom, *Leviticus*, I, 34).

Nel capitolo terzo l'autore esamina il rito descritto in Lv 4 che, come è noto, contiene la prescrizione del rito purificatorio per i peccati commessi inavvertitamente (sommo sacerdote, comunità, capotribù, fedele comune). G. preferisce concentrare l'attenzione sul rito relativo alla colpa del capotribù in quanto esso presenta tutti gli elementi caratterizzanti il rito. Dall'esame del testo l'autore ricava la conclusione che il rito "provoca la purificazione per l'errore commesso dal peccatore, e questi, a seguito del rito, riceve il perdono" (49). Poiché il testo parla di perdono per la trasgressione ad un comandamento (Lv 4,2.13.22; 5,17), esso presuppone che si tratti di colpe morali (50). Su questo punto G. si discosta decisamente dalle posizioni del suo maestro Milgrom. A pagina 69 l'autore espone in sintesi le linee del suo pensiero al riguardo: a) il sacrificio *hî't* proprio per lo stesso nome connesso con il verbo *hî'* (piel) "peccare", e quindi per motivi linguistici, può essere reso con "offerta del peccato" (sin offering); poiché però la funzione del rito è quella di "purificare dal peccato", l'autore preferisce conservare la denominazione cara a Milgrom ossia quella di "offerta di purificazione" anche se tale purificazione non è limitata alle impurità fisiche di tipo rituale ma riguarda anche le colpe di ordine morale (69).

Il capitolo 4 è dedicato all'esame del rito espiatorio a favore del sommo sacerdote (Lv 4,3-12) e della comunità (vv.13-21), che consiste per entrambi i riti nell'aspersione del sangue delle vittime (un giovenco per ciascun rito) davanti al velo che separa il santo dal santo dei santi. Al di là dei dettagli del cerimoniale, ciò che più importa è il significato che G. attribuisce a tale rito: esso è il prerequisito per ottenere da Dio il perdono dei peccati commessi inavvertitamente (83).

In casi particolari, trattati nel capitolo 5, la carne della vittima del sacrificio espiatorio, dalla quale è stato raccolto il sangue utilizzato per le

aspersioni, è destinata a servire da cibo per il celebrante (Lv 6,19; 10,17). A giudizio dell'autore tale consumazione della carne sarebbe parte integrante del rito espiatorio (105).

Il capitolo 6 è senza dubbio uno dei più importanti di tutta l'opera; in esso viene affrontata la questione di chi e che cosa sia l'oggetto del rito di purificazione. L'autore parte dalla constatazione che in Lv 4,26 il sacerdote compie il rito in favore del capotribù e sembra che attraverso tale rito sia rimossa la trasgressione compiuta da colui che ha violato uno dei comandamenti divini (v. 22). G. si chiede dove si trovi la colpa nel momento in cui il celebrante compie il rito: nella persona per cui viene compiuto il rito o sull'altare che viene purificato (106)? L'autore ritiene che il rito sia diretto a eliminare la frattura che con la colpa si è prodotta tra l'uomo e Dio; siccome il testo asserisce che si tratta della colpa sua (Lv 4,26), sembra evidente che il rito liberi il peccatore dalla colpa (106). Da qui la conclusione che *kipper* "l si riferisca alla persona che ha commesso la trasgressione e per la quale il sacerdote compie il rito, e la preposizione *mn* indicchi la colpa dalla quale detta persona è purificata" (107). Su questo punto G. è in contrasto con le posizioni di Milgrom, il quale ritiene che l'oggetto della purificazione non sia il peccatore ma solo il santuario (107); infatti, sempre secondo Milgrom, il sangue del sacrificio non è mai applicato sulla persona ma soltanto sul santuario e sugli oggetti che vi si trovano (coperchio dell'arca, altare). Per contrastare le posizioni tradizionali di Milgrom, G. parte dall'analisi delle diverse costruzioni sintattiche in cui ricorre *kipper* (cf. 110-111) seguito dalla preposizione *mn*, e riconosce che *kipper* + *mn* spesso ha valore privativo, ossia "purificare da", quindi *mn* indica ciò che viene rimosso (117). L'autore conclude: "Il processo del *kpr* rimuove le colpe morali dall'offerente" (126). Quindi il giorno dell'Espiazione (il *kippur* di Lv 16) rimuove il male dal popolo per il quale sono compiuti i riti in esso descritti, come risulta chiaramente da Lv 16,30 in cui si dice che in tale giorno gli israeliti saranno "purificati da tutti i loro peccati" (129). Le posizioni dell'autore sono riassunte in questi termini: dopo il controllo delle costruzioni sintattiche in cui ricorre *kpr* si può concludere che tutte le offerte di purificazione rimuovono il male da colui che le offre (142).

Il capitolo 7 è dedicato a studiare il modo con cui il peccato contamina il santuario. Tale contaminazione avviene "a distanza", cioè non è necessario che il colpevole entri in contatto col tempio (149). Per esprimere tale effetto inquinante della colpa G., in sintonia con Milgrom, usa il termine greco *miasma* che comporta una specie di propagazione per via aerea (152). L'autore riconosce che il testo del Pentateuco non specifica il modo con cui il male contamina il santuario, e considera la spiegazione di Milgrom una "utile metafora" per evidenziare l'effetto che il comportamento umano ha sul tempio, ossia la sua contaminazione a distanza (160).

Nel capitolo 8 si espongono le tecniche prescritte dal testo per eliminare gli effetti perversi del peccato. La soluzione proposta è di considerare i riti prescritti in Lv 4 come complementari al rito di Lv 16; ossia le purificazioni di Lv 4 tolgono dall'offerente le colpe, le quali però non verrebbero eliminate ma solamente trasferite al santuario, da dove verrebbero eliminate annualmente con il rito del *kippur* (177).

Nel capitolo 9 l'autore precisa quali siano le colpe espiabili: le impurità di carattere fisico descritte in Lv 11-15 (188), e le colpe involontarie per le quali sono prescritti i riti di Lv 4, mentre non sarebbero soggetti a espiazione rituale i peccati volontari e premeditati. Neanche il giorno del *kippur* può eliminare tali colpe (213).

La terza parte dell'opera (capp. 10-11) entra in alcuni dettagli del rito del *kippur* e nel capitolo 11 esamina la parte di Lv 16, 20-22 in cui si descrive il rito del capro destinato ad Azazel. L'autore riconosce la stranezza di tale rito in quanto gli si attribuisce un potere espiatorio nonostante non sia un sacrificio (247).

Dalla sintesi dell'opera di G. fin qui presentata, si può valutare la complessità dell'argomento trattato, che l'autore sviluppa con competenza e minuziosa analisi del testo. Risulta evidente tuttavia che nonostante su alcune questioni si discosti dalle posizioni di Milgrom, egli ne condivide sostanzialmente il pensiero.

Vorrei segnalare alcuni punti che a mio avviso non risultano convincenti.

1) Le colpe perdonate da Dio in Lv 4 sarebbero rimosse dal peccatore e trasferite al tempio; da qui la necessità di purificare il tempio annualmente nel giorno del *kippur* (177). Se così fosse tali colpe in realtà non sarebbero perdonate in quanto la contaminazione del tempio è la causa per cui viene distrutto lo stesso tempio e tutta Gerusalemme (2 Cr 36,14); il rimedio quindi risulta peggiore del male in quanto se il peccato individuale provoca la morte dell'individuo, l'accumulo delle impurità nel tempio causa la distruzione della nazione! Si deve inoltre notare che le colpe per le quali si purifica il tempio in Lv 16 non sono le stesse menzionate in Lv 4; mentre infatti in Lv 4 non si menzionano *peša'* e *'āwōn*, in Lv 16,16.22 sono menzionate specificatamente. Inoltre mentre in Lv 4 si parla esplicitamente di colpe "involontarie" in Lv 16 tale vocabolo è del tutto assente e quindi l'oggetto della purificazione del *kippur* sono tutte le colpe, senza considerare la volontarietà. Secondo G. quando l'accumulo delle colpe nel santuario rende la permanenza divina nel tempio insopportabile Dio lo abbandona (231). Ma nessuno è in grado di conoscere il livello di inquinamento che provoca tale abbandono. Tra l'altro, poiché per G. il rito del *kippur* è pre-esilico, la distruzione di Gerusalemme del 587 sarebbe la prova storica che il rito prescritto dal Signore era del tutto inefficace. Infatti non era stato in grado di eliminare dal tempio i peccati che ne causarono l'abbandono da parte di Dio e la distruzione (2 Cr 36,14; Ez 9,3; 10,4.18-19).

2) Secondo G. il capro per Azazel porterebbe via i peccati rimossi dal tempio (258); se questo fosse il modo tradizionale per eliminare i peccati dal territorio di Israele sorprende che in occasione della purificazione del tempio descritta in 2 Cr 29 si parli solo del sacrificio di sette capri per il sacrificio espiatorio (vv. 23-24), ma non ci sia menzione di un capro emissario sul quale scaricare le impurità rimosse.

3) Lv 17,11 afferma che il sangue è posto sull'altare per espiare per le anime; è chiaro quindi che non si deve enfatizzare il posto su cui viene compiuto il rito, ma il significato che al rito viene assegnato dal testo. Lv 17,11 è l'unico testo che ci offre un'interpretazione dei riti descritti in Lv 4 e 16.

Nonostante queste osservazioni esposte, l'opera di G. segna un progresso considerevole nella comprensione del rito espiatorio e dovrà essere presa in considerazione da coloro che vogliono capire questo elemento essenziale del Levitico.

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J. Cheryl EXUM, *Song of Songs*. A Commentary (The Old Testament Library), Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. xxiii-263 p. 15,5 × 23

Since its appearance more than forty years ago, The Old Testament Library Commentary Series has provided students, clergy, and professional scholars alike critical and insightful interpretation of most of the books of the Old Testament. It has been foundational in much contemporary biblical research and it has set the bar for other studies of its kind. With her commentary on *Song of Songs*, J. Cheryl Exum has continued this noble tradition, addressing the most significant historical, linguistic, literary, and theological features of this remarkable biblical book. While the thirteen pages of bibliography show that she is cognizant of both the standard and current investigations of the *Song*, her own translation is a fresh rendering of the text and her own commentary is an original interpretation of its meaning. Throughout both the Introduction and the commentary itself, she engages in dialogue with these scholars, summarizing their positions and stating her own.

The eighty-six pages of introduction could be considered an enlightening monograph in its own right. Although she explains several of the prominent interpretive approaches to the *Song* that have developed and been employed down through the centuries — allegorical interpretation, dramatic performance, a collection of wedding songs, and cultic reenactment — Exum maintains that it is lyric poetry celebrating erotic love and sexual desire. After summarizing the divisions advanced by various contemporary commentators, she explains how she came to the conclusion that the *Song* is really one long poem with various movements. She argues that while the complex literary patterning found within the book clearly identifies both different speakers and shifts in emotional expression, the intricacy of this poetic patterning attests to the artistic unity of the poem.

The 'controlling poetic strategies' that Exum discovers in the poem include: the lovers' employment of words to conjure up the image of the beloved; the blurring of distinctions between the anticipation and the enjoyment of the love; repetition of emotional reaction and resistance to closure of the experience of love; and an invitation to readers to enter into the dynamics of the drama of love. The manner in which the longing, searching, finding, losing, longing, etc. are reported and described creates this 'illusion of intimacy', that suggests that the readers are actually present while the dynamic of love unfolds. By means of this

poetic device, it is the readers who will judge the authenticity of the erotic description, using their own experience of love as gauge.

The relationship between the woman and the man is discussed extensively. Exum believes that the *Song* tells us less about the gender relations in ancient Israel than about sexual desire as expressed in that culture. While the majority of the biblical books describe heterosexual love from the male point of view, the female perspective found in this book argues for an understanding of mutual erotic desire and sexual pleasure. The metaphors of the *Song* suggest that the rest of creation reflects and actually participates in the lovers' mutual delight in each other. Exum holds that though their love is mutual, it is not identical. She makes some very interesting distinctions in this regard. The woman is lovesick, while the man is awe-struck; her passion is expressed through her sweet words, his is communicated through the character of his gaze. The man may be in awe of the woman, but she is in desperate need of him.

The literary treatment of the *Song* opens with a discussion of ancient Near Eastern love poetry generally. This places the book within its own historical context, which throws some light on some of the unfamiliar characteristics of the poem. Here examples of Egyptian and Mesopotamian poems point to both similarities and differences. These selections also show that such love poetry was not overtly religious. Exum agrees with those who claim that at some time in its history the *Song* may have achieved the status of religious literature, but it probably did not originate as such. As for authorship, she acknowledges that Mesopotamian women did indeed compose or commission love poetry, but the sex of the author of this biblical book cannot be deduced from the text of the poem.

Voice is another matter. Clearly, the prominent voice in the poem is that of the woman. Though some authors use this fact as proof of female authorship, Exum is not willing to take that step, insisting that voice alone is not enough evidence. Furthermore, she wonders whether male editors and scribes whose agendas certainly reflected the gender-biases of their time, would have preserved intact erotic poetry written by a woman or women. Finally, while most commentators tend to date the *Song* in or around the Hellenistic period of Israel's history, Exum maintains that knowing when the poem was written would probably not affect our understanding of it in any major way. "Love poetry, like love, knows no season" (67). This discussion of authorship is followed by a short summary of the book's journey from secular to sacred literature. The possible relationship of this process to the book's allegorization is then addressed.

The Introduction ends with a discussion of the influence of feminist biblical criticism on the interpretation of this biblical book. As with all other controversial aspects of the book, Exum is quite even-handed in her treatment. She explains and critiques both female and male authors, privileging no one position. However, she does claim that, to her knowledge, the commentary that follows is the first of its kind to examine systematically the role played by gender differences in the very meaning of the *Song*.

The commentary itself moves through the book line by line. Each section begins with a brief explanatory summary of what will follow. Detailed notes explain Exum's original translation. Word by word she uncovers the subtle nuances of the language of the poem. Perhaps the feature that stands out the

most in this regard is her rendering of *ddym* as 'caresses' rather than the standard term 'love.' She states that the standard translation is too abstract; not at all appropriate in a poem that highlights the very tangible and erotic nature of human love. This single detail well characterizes the tone of the entire commentary. She consistently points out how "the *Song* not only tells but shows its readers that love is as strong as death". This is done through the passionate words of the lovers rather than by means of description of their love.

As she moves slowly and expertly through the poem, Exum breaks open its sensuous imagery allowing the extravagance of the metaphors to overflow like perfume poured prodigally from an urn. She allows the poem itself to sketch the contours of the characters. The woman is always center stage, while the man seems to dart in and out as the dynamics of love flow to and fro. While a definite Solomonic aura can be found in several places, she considers this a fictitious romantic role in which the woman casts her lover. The introduction of the daughters of Jerusalem as a kind of refrain is seen as a poetic device meant to invite the audience of the poem into the intimate and seemingly private world of the lovers. There is no indication that the woman considers them intrusive, for she speaks to them in a relatively friendly fashion. Her relationship with her brothers and the sentinels is another matter. Exum maintains that both the anger of the brothers and the harsh treatment of the sentinels are blind motifs. They are meant to show that all is not tranquil in the garden of love, but they are themes that are not really developed.

According to Exum, the passages that describe the bodily characteristics of the man and the woman reveal some of the reigning cultural ideals of male and female beauty. These metaphoric descriptions appear to be erotically explicit while at the same time concealing. She points out that the imagery employed by the man is more vivid and animated than that of the woman, while hers appears to be more relational. The distinction between an erotic look and a voyeuristic gaze is carefully made. The latter tends to objectify the one looked upon, while the first participates in what it enjoys. Exum states that the readers will have to make a decision upon this matter themselves.

Is the passion described in the poem ever fully consummated? Commentating on 5,4, Exum maintains that there is no clear answer to this question because of the indirection of the description. The double entendre in the verse that creates this ambiguity is an example of both the woman's romantic conjuring up of her beloved and the poet's blurring of the longing and satisfaction that characterize the entire poem. At this point in the commentary, Exum includes the interpretations of several authors. While she does not believe this passage itself describes sexual intercourse, she does say that it is suggested in the progression of the woman's account of the event. According to her, the very indirection of the poem is evidence of the artistic ability of the poet.

The *Song's* erotic imperative reaches its most passionate peak in 8,6 where the intensity and fervor of love is compared with the power and inevitability of death. Exum asserts that these two dissimilar realities have more in common than their undeniable power. She states that: "Losing oneself in another in the act of love can also seem like a transcending of mortality" (251). Furthermore, like death or Sheol or the netherworld, love cannot be withstood or resisted. Throughout her commentary, Exum has demonstrated how the very language and imagery of the poem demonstrates this fact.

With this commentary Exum has provided us with a reading of the *Song of Songs* that is well grounded in critical scholarly analysis, attentive to the intricacies of ancient Hebrew poetry, and sensitive to the contemporary reader. It is an outstanding contribution to a solid and reliable commentary series.

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Novum Testamentum

John Carlson STUBE, *A Graeco-Roman Rhetorical Reading of the Farewell Discourse*. (Library of the New Testament Studies 309). New York – London, T&T Clark, 2006. viii-245 p. 16 × 24. £65.00.

The earliest Fathers of the Church and contemporary exegetes have offered numerous interpretations of the Bible. On one extreme is literalism with verbal inspiration, God or the Holy Spirit dictating each word with every historical event and episode coinciding with what was actually said and what actually happened and the opposite extreme mingling structuralism and post modernism with as many interpretations as individuals who read the scripture with not even an elemental agreement on what the text might mean. It also seems that each new generation of exegetes finds some new approach to reading the Word of God.

John Carlson Stube's book in its very title gives the reader a hint of what the author wants to say about chapters 13 to 17 of the Gospel of John. His particular hermeneutic will be classical rhetoric (Graeco-Roman) and he views these chapters as united into a Farewell Discourse (in spite of what many see as more than one speech: Farewell Discourses). His general thesis can be summarized as: Jesus (as recorded by the author of the gospel) used classical rhetoric not just to console his disciples but to lead them to discipleship as they continue the ministry of Jesus. Seeing these chapters as consolation seems too shallow and one need not attempt to rearrange the chapters since repetition and amplification fits well into a rhetorical approach.

The book contains seven chapters studying: a Review of the Literature on the chapters (chapter 1); the Rhetorical Dimension of the Text (chapter 2); the Rhetorical Unity: Context, Genre, Situation (chapter 3); a Rhetorical Reading: *Exordium, Narratio, Partitio* (chapter 4); a Rhetorical Reading: *Confirmatio* (chapter 5); a Rhetorical Reading: *Epilogos* (chapter 6) and finally a summary and conclusion (chapter 7).

The thesis is carefully presented beginning with the review of the literature which is extensive moving from the scholarly approach to a more

pious reading of the text. Stube likes certain authors (Segovia and Kennedy) more than others but finds weaknesses everywhere when compared to his own understanding of the presence of the classical rhetorical approach throughout these chapters. Stube sees his analysis as unique. In the other attempts of interpreting the chapters the author believes that the writers were more concerned with structure dealing with arrangement and classification. If other authors draw theological conclusions, Stube considers them "really quite shallow" (51) for they do not give sufficient attention to what Stube believes are the major points of the Farewell Discourse. He sees too much emphasis on the narrative elements and not sufficient attention paid to the centrality of symbols and metaphors. Stube is not interested in metaphor and symbol for their own sake but what they say to the reader. What purpose does the Farewell Discourse serve? What, why and how is it saying it? Applying a rhetorical method of analysis based on the literary context in which the text was originally written will offer an understanding of the author's intent and then show how the written text was actually heard by its intended audience.

Lest readers think Stube reads too much into the text by finding a rhetorical approach, he spends a considerable amount of time showing the presence of the rhetorical style in the Old Testament and in rabbinical literature and offers examples. In Wisdom literature the personification of Wisdom contributes to the power of persuasion (a key element in rhetoric). Quoting James L. Crenshaw, he offers examples of rhetoric in Job and Proverbs. He finds similar examples of rhetoric in rabbinic literature, e.g. 1 Esdras 3,1–5,3. Thus Stube sees no reason why the author would not be familiar with this particular type of writing.

As is common today he criticizes the historical critical approach and does well in explaining the movement from the diachronic to the synchronic in contemporary exegesis. Anyone who was subjected to a careful analysis of sources and study of the historical situation of author and audience without ever coming to a conclusion to the meaning of the text can appreciate the need for the synchronic to complete the diachronic.

Throughout the work Stube refers frequently to the meaning of a rhetorical approach using the definition of Aristotle: "an ability in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion". Jesus wants to persuade and prepare his disciples for their ministry to continue what he had begun. He offers three reasons why this approach can be justified. First, anthropologically and philosophically rhetoric is a universal phenomenon based on the fundamental workings of the human mind and heart. It has always been a mode of human communication. Secondly, this approach can be justified historically. In the time of the composition of the New Testament the Near East had already experienced Hellenization. The authors of the New Testament knew and understood Greek and rhetoric was universally taught throughout the Roman Empire and can be found in orations and in political debates as well as in law courts and other avenues of human interaction and communication. Finally, such an approach can be justified theologically. His careful analysis of these chapters demonstrates its presence bringing the disciples to understand and accept (persuasion) their own role in the continuing ministry of Jesus. Other religious and philosophical movements set out to persuade followers. Christianity would do the same and these

chapters support what the disciples will do to persuade both readers and listeners. What is also helpful in a rhetorical approach is the ability to account for both literary and historical dimensions of the chapters by paying attention to the concerns and contributions of both.

Following Lloyd Blitzer, Stube pays attention to the rhetorical situation, “the complex of persons, events, objects and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence” (61). Stube takes this description to offer a rhetorical reading of these chapters by examining the persons, events, objects, time, place and the relations involved since they all influence what is said and why it is said. In this way the student of these chapters enters into a better understanding of its meaning. The exigence contained herein these chapters involves the set of circumstances in which individuals are called upon to make a response. In the Farewell Discourse the disciples are distressed, in sorrow, confused with troubled hearts with misunderstanding, discouragement and shaken in faith that all flow from the imminent departure of Jesus with attacks from within (Judas) and from without (the religious authorities). The rhetorical problem can be found in the failure of the disciples to understand the mission of Jesus. Of the three classical species of rhetoric (judicial, deliberative and epideictic) Stube sees the Farewell Discourse as primarily epideictic with shades of deliberative rhetoric as Jesus interacts with his disciples pointing them and the intended readers forward to their own mission to the Christian community and to the world.

Stube’s intention is clear: He has undertaken “a rigorous rhetorical analysis of the Farewell Discourse in John 13–17. The rhetorical unit, the rhetorical situations of the unit, the *genre* of the discourse (a farewell-type scene) and the rhetorical problem spoken to by the text” (214).

An outline of how Stube views the text will help the reader to understand how he proceeds. What follows represents the rhetorical shape of John 13–17 according to Staube:

13.1 *Exordium*

13,2-20 *Narratio*

2-11 The foot washing

12-20 An exhortation

21-30 Disclosure of Jesus’ betrayal

13,21-38 *Partitio*

31-32 Mutual glorification of Father and Son A

33 Little time remaining B

34-35 A mission of love C

36-38 Jesus imminent departure D

(Now follows a chiasmic amplification of these four motifs)

14,1–16,33 *Confirmatio*

14,1-31 Jesus’ imminent departure D’

15,1–16,15 A mission of love C’

16,16-33 Little time remaining B’

17,1-26 *Epilogos*

1-5 Mutual glorification of Father and Son A'
 6-26 Recapitulation of chief topics

This reader found particularly interesting Stube's presentation of *ethos* (character), *pathos* (disposition of the listener) and *logos* (the actual argument) all leading to persuasion. His ability to take elements from classical rhetoric and apply them to these chapters, if nothing more, can be fascinating.

This reviewer has always wondered about the relationship between the parable of the Good Shepherd in chapter 10 and the parable of the Vine and Branches in chapter 15. They seem to be related both structurally and theologically. Chapter 10 stresses faith and chapter 15 stresses love, the essential elements of the Johannine community. Apart from some general references to this chapter in a list of many references, Stube refers only once to the parable of the Good Shepherd when he remarks: "Jesus identifies himself as the one who lays down his life for his friends (10,11.17-18.). Here in 15,13 he states there is no greater love than this" (149). I think the relationship between these two chapters deserves more than this remark.

Anyone who tries to keep up with the volumes written on the Fourth Gospel can always find something new and interesting and helpful. Stube offers reasons why the rhetorical dimension should never be omitted in studying these chapters, as well as other chapters and books of the Bible. For this reviewer it should be seen as another effort to delve deeper into the meaning of the text. The rhetorical approach, however, remains that: another possible interpretation and unfortunately not the one and only and final view of these important chapters of the Gospel of John. Exegetes will continue to use new methods of interpretation. Certainly as Stube rightly remarks, the form and source criticism, the historical critical approach to the Bible can never be sufficient. Nor can the narrative or sociological or feminist approach offer any lasting key for complete understanding. Each one contributes some understanding of the text. The same is true for a rhetorical reading of this text or any other. For scholars and specialists in the Gospel of John, Stube's work offers much to ponder and to include in any effort to understand and teach this fascinating document.

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Maria NEUBRAND, *Israel, die Völker und die Kirche*. Eine exegetische Studie zu Apg 15 (SBB 55), Katholisches Bibelwerk Verlag, Stuttgart 2006, 282 p.

L'Habilitationsschrift, légèrement remaniée, de Maria Neubrand (désormais M.N.) présente les résultats de l'exégèse d'un épisode (Ac 15) dont tous admettent qu'il fut décisif pour les chrétiens d'origine non juive. Le titre, *Israel, die Völker und die Kirche*, indique obliquement les questions abordées. La thèse de M.N., répétée à l'envi tout au long des chapitres, est qu'Ac 15, en particulier l'argumentation de Jacques aux vv. 13-21, détermine

le statut socio-religieux des non juifs ayant adhéré à l'Évangile: il ne leur est pas demandé de devenir juifs et membres du peuple d'Israël, car il leur suffit d'être disciples du Christ pour être sauvés.

Les trois premiers chapitres mettent en place les données et positions à partir desquelles les suivants vont progresser dans l'exégèse d'Ac 15. Le ch. 1 (15-27) fait le point sur la question du rapport entre Israël et les Nations dans le NT. Beaucoup d'exégètes reconnaissent aujourd'hui que «Dieu n'a pas annulé l'élection d'Israël comme peuple de la première alliance, et ne lui a pas substitué l'Église» (19), et, corollairement, que les juifs n'ayant pas cru en l'Évangile restent le «peuple de Dieu». Mais des divergences existent encore sur la relation existant entre les chrétiens d'origine juive, les juifs non chrétiens et les chrétiens non juifs. Raisonnant en termes de modèles et s'étant déjà exprimée sur celui offert par les lettres pauliniennes (dans sa thèse doctorale, *Abraham - Vater von Juden und Nichtjuden: Eine exegetische Studie zu Röm 4* [FzB 85; Würzburg 1997], et dans un article écrit en collaboration avec J. SEIDEL, «“Eingepfropft in den edlen Ölbaum” (Röm 11,24). Der Ölbaum ist nicht Israel», *Biblische Notizen* 105 [2000] 61-76), elle se propose maintenant de déterminer le modèle élaboré en Ac 15. L'analyse de ce chapitre lui semble essentielle pour repérer l'ecclésiologie de Lc/Ac (ch. 2, 28-38). Mais avant d'en faire l'exégèse, elle reprend en ses grandes lignes la recherche actuelle sur le rapport Israël/Église dans l'œuvre lucanienne (ch. 3, 39-79). Les uns insistent sur la continuité et les autres sur la discontinuité, mais la question semble s'être déplacée. Si tous admettent que les croyants non juifs font partie intégrante de l'Église, il importe néanmoins de savoir ce que le passage entend, en faisant dire à Jacques que Dieu «a pris de parmi les Nations un peuple» (Ac 15,14; λαός sans article). Selon M.N., l'auteur d'Ac ne veut certainement pas dire que les disciples non juifs de Jésus font partie du peuple d'Israël. Et elle ne partage pas l'opinion de ceux qui parlent d'élargissement (ou de rétrécissement) du peuple de Dieu, ni de ceux pour qui Ac 15 en décrirait une nouvelle configuration.

Une fois situé l'horizon de la recherche, M.N. peut se lancer dans l'analyse d'Ac 15 (ch. 4 à 9). Elle commence par s'interroger sur l'occasion et l'objet de l'assemblée de Jérusalem (ch. 4, 80-91). La question controversée (Ac 15,1.5) est juive: les disciples de Jésus non juifs doivent-ils ou non se convertir au judaïsme, devenir sujets de la loi juive, autrement dit membres du peuple d'Israël? Suffit-il d'être disciple du Christ pour être sauvé (83, 84, 89)? Le terme grec ζήτημα ne se rencontre ni dans la LXX ni ailleurs en NT, mais seulement en Ac (15,2; 18,15; 23,29; 25,19; 26,3), et désigne toujours des litiges ou discussions relatives à la loi et aux coutumes juives. M.N. se demande aussi qui sont les opposants de Paul et Barnabas, et qui les envoie à Jérusalem (quel sujet pour ἑταῖρον en 15,2)? Après avoir examiné les diverses possibilités, pour des motifs syntaxiques et sémantiques, elle montre que le πρὸς αὐτούς désigne les frères non juifs d'Antioche, et le sujet du verbe ἑταῖρον les disciples d'origine juive. Toujours selon M.N., le discours de Pierre (ch. 5, 92-107) en Ac 15,7-11, montre que rachat et salut ne dépendent pas de l'appartenance au peuple d'Israël; elle souligne à juste titre la coloration paulinienne de ce discours. Le récit que Paul et Barnabé font de leur expérience (v. 12, préparé au v. 4) se présente comme un *Erfahrungsbeweis* (preuve par les faits), montrant que le cas de Corneille

n'est pas isolé, mais vaut pour *tous* les païens se convertissant à l'Évangile. Les ch. 6 à 9 font l'exégèse du discours de Jacques (vv. 13-21). Le premier (ch. 6, 108-130) est consacré à Ac 15,14, qui reconnaît aux non juifs disciples de Jésus le titre de λαός, peuple distinct du λαός (précédé de l'article) Israël (Lc 1,68.77; 2,32; 4,27; 7,16; Ac 7,34; 13,17; 26,17.23; 28,27). La formulation et l'idée se trouvent déjà en Za 2,15 LXX (ἔθνη πολλὰ ... ἔσονται αὐτῷ [Dieu] εἰς λαόν), qui établissait déjà une *synkrisis* entre les nations et Israël. Mais la distinction entre les deux demeure: les nations n'ont pas à devenir membres ou partie d'Israël. Ac 15,14 est au demeurant en accord avec le reste de Lc/Ac, en particulier avec la prophétie de Syméon de Lc 2,30-32 (119). Si pour l'ensemble des exégètes, le vocable Συμεών du v. 14 est une forme archaïsante du nom de Simon-Pierre, M.N. préfère y voir une allusion à la prophétie de Lc 2,30-32, destinée au lecteur et typique de l'intratextualité lucanienne. Car Ac 15,14 ne fait pas que reprendre les propos des vv. 7-11; le verset est aussi et surtout une déclaration théologique sur l'élection des païens, très proche de celle de Lc 2,20-32, où le syntagme πάντες οἱ λαοί, est inclusif, désignant Israël *et* les Nations, et le singulier λαός σου le seul Israël (124). Bref, à la suite de Lc 2,31-32, Ac 15,14 redit le projet salvifique de Dieu en faveur des Nations et sa volonté de leur donner un statut (λαός) analogue à celui d'Israël. Le ch. 7 (131-182) examine la citation qu'Ac 15,16-17 fait d'Am 9,11-12 (LXX) et, montrant la non pertinence de l'interprétation ecclésiologique, opte avec raison pour l'interprétation christologique, qui trouve de nombreux appuis dans le reste de l'œuvre lucanienne et déjà dans l'AT (Is 6,5; 2R 7,13.16 [LXX], etc.). Le ch. 8 (183-219) met en valeur la signification historico-salvifique de la citation pour les non juifs disciples du Christ. Le texte d'Amos n'y est pas analysé à partir des sources qu'aurait pu avoir Luc, mais de sa fonction en Ac 15 et dans l'œuvre lucanienne. M.N. met en valeur les changements opérés par Ac 15,16-18 au texte d'Amos, en particulier pour le terme κύριος qui désigne *le Christ* et non Dieu (202). Elle montre aussi que l'élection d'un λαός pris d'entre les peuples est nécessaire pour que l'Évangile soit proclamé et cru jusqu'aux confins de la terre. Dès lors, l'élection de non juifs restant non juifs doit être reconnue comme venant de Dieu et ayant une fonction salvifique: «elle fait partie des espérances d'Israël et sert à leur accomplissement futur» (215), pour que le règne messianique atteigne les confins de la terre (216). Pour Ac 15,20 (ch. 9, 220-249), M.N. montre avec raison que le décret n'a pas pour but de favoriser la vie et les repas en commun entre chrétiens d'origine juive et non juive (229-230); supposant bien plutôt que les chrétiens non juifs n'ont pas à être circoncis et donc à observer la Loi entière, il en énonce les conséquences concrètes, celles d'un λαός choisi et purifié par Dieu; il n'a pas de fonction ecclésiale, mais vise plutôt à faire correspondre la vie des ethno-chrétiens à leur nouveau statut salvifique. La conclusion (ch. 10, 250-253) reprend brièvement et nerveusement les principaux choix et résultats de l'ouvrage.

Disant mon accord avec les choix exégétiques presque tous bien fondés de M.N., je m'interroge davantage sur la nature brumeuse d'Ac 15,14, qu'elle appelle la thèse de Jacques, et sur laquelle elle ne dit pas grand-chose. Ma critique ne vise donc pas l'exégèse descriptive qui est la sienne, excellente à tous égards, bien plutôt ce qu'elle n'en a pas tiré. Elle répète en effet plusieurs fois tout au long des chapitres, que Jacques reconnaît aux disciples de Jésus

d'origine païenne (ou non juive, comme on voudra) un statut *analogue* à celui des disciples membres du peuple d'Israël: les païens convertis à l'Évangile formeraient un peuple (λαός, sans article) aux prérogatives analogues à celles des membres juifs (appartenant, eux, au peuple d'Israël, ὁ λαός, avec un article). Mais il ne suffit pas de prononcer l'adjectif *analogue* pour que le statut des disciples d'origine païenne devienne clair, comme par enchantement. Analogue selon quel point de vue? Si M.N. montre bien qu'Ac 15 insiste sur le fait que les disciples d'origine païenne n'ont pas besoin de devenir sujets de la loi mosaïque, autrement dit de devenir juifs, pour être sauvés, elle en reste là. Il importait en effet de se demander si l'auteur de Lc/Ac fournit ailleurs de plus amples informations relatives à ce statut *analogue*. Certes, les appellatifs donnés par le narrateur aux membres juifs et non juifs du groupe croyant sont les mêmes: tous sont disciples (28x d'Ac 6,1 à 21,16; en Ac 14,21 le verbe μαθητεύω s'applique d'ailleurs aux païens adhérant à l'Évangile), frères (Ac 1,15; 11,1; 12,17; 14,2; 21,17-18), adeptes de la Voie (Ac 9,2; 18,25.26; 19,9.23; 22,4; 24,14.22), tous ont part au même héritage (26,18), etc. Mais, ou ces appellatifs sont internes au groupe chrétien, ou ils ne permettent pas de le distinguer clairement du peuple d'Israël (dont les membres se disent eux aussi croyants, élus, frères, héritiers, saints, etc.). Le terme ἐκκλησία ne suffit pas davantage, puisque le narrateur d'Ac désigne aussi par là des assemblées locales qui ne sont pas spécifiquement chrétiennes (Ac 19,32.39). Bref, si aujourd'hui *Église* désigne distinctement les chrétiens par rapport à tous les autres groupes religieux, dans les Ac en revanche, le même vocable (ἐκκλησία) n'a encore ni la même extension ni la même désignation précise. Mais, et ce serait la seule exception, en Ac 20,18 où il apparaît pour la dernière fois (je laisse de côté 9,31, car le pluriel est aussi attesté), ἐκκλησία pourrait bien désigner le groupe chrétien dans son ensemble et pas seulement une ou des communautés locales. Mais, à supposer qu'il en soit ainsi, la désignation reste encore interne, d'un membre du groupe parlant à d'autres membres du même groupe. Faut-il ainsi se résoudre à admettre que l'auteur d'Ac ne cherche pas à préciser davantage l'identité du groupe chrétien par rapport au peuple d'Israël, et, dans ce groupe, de manière plus élaborée, le statut des croyants venant du judaïsme et du paganisme? Faut-il en conclure que l'on ne trouve pas en Ac de réelle avancée conceptuelle sur le sujet? Étant donné l'exégèse christologique qu'elle fait de la citation d'Amos 9 en Ac 15,16-17, M.N. aurait pu, dans une conclusion plus axée sur l'intertextualité Lc/Ac, exploiter l'appellation Χριστιανοί (ou Χριστιανός) d'Ac 11,26 et 26,28, par laquelle les non chrétiens juifs et non juifs ont pour la première fois perçu le caractère essentiellement *christique* du groupe des disciples (avec raison appelé *Christusanhängerschaft* par M.N.), mais aussi ce qui le distinguait des groupes juifs et en faisait un groupe religieux nouveau. Selon certains exégètes, Χριστιανοί, serait un sobriquet et le narrateur lucanien lui donnerait pas un sens fort. Ils semblent avoir d'autant plus tort que le même narrateur mentionne la chose après le baptême de Corneille, autrement dit après l'entrée des païens, signe que c'est comme groupe composé de juifs *et* de non juifs qu'ils furent ainsi nommés. Quand à la référence exclusivement christique, on n'objectera pas, j'espère, qu'elle est superficielle — elle correspond au ἐν Χριστῷ paulinien, dont les connotations ont bien été analysées par nos prédécesseurs. La remarque d'Agrippa en Ac

26,28 va elle aussi à l'essentiel et donne bien à entendre que l'identité et le statut des disciples sont en relation essentielle à Jésus Christ — et que les autres, y compris celle à Israël, lui sont subordonnées.

Ces remarques faites, revenons aux analyses convaincantes de M.N. Outre leur justesse, elles prouvent une très bonne connaissance de la littérature secondaire. Si les auteurs allemands sont cités en masse — *habilitation* obligeait —, les auteurs de langue anglaise le sont également. On a donc une bonne image de la situation actuelle de l'exégèse de l'œuvre lucanienne, et ce n'est pas le moindre mérite de ce travail.

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Scott D. MACKIE, *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (WUNT 223). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2007. xi-284 p. 15,5 × 23.

Eschatology is a perennial challenge to anyone engaged in the study of Hebrews, and so this clearly written, well-documented treatment of the ultimate situations envisaged by the author of Hebrews is more than welcome. The book is a revised version of the doctoral dissertation defended at Fuller Theological Seminary in California in 2006.

There are four major parts to the study. "Introduction: Eschatology, the Situation of the Recipients, and the Author's Hortatory Response" (1-26); "Part One: Two-Age Eschatology and Exhortation" (29-152); "Part Two: The Heavenly Sanctuary: Eschatology and Exhortation" (155-230); "Conclusion: Eschatology and Exhortation in Hebrews" (231-232). There is a bibliography with emphasis on English-language titles. (The stress on English is not as narrowing as it might seem, considering the rich coverage of Hebrews in English in recent years.) There are indices of ancient sources, modern authors, and subjects. The book is impeccably proof-read and easy to read.

For this reviewer the chief value of reading the book turned out to be the ample footnotes with rich documentation. This dissertation was carefully researched. The footnotes are not a mindless proliferation of file-card emptying references, but contain many valuable insights of the author and of the sources he cites. For example: 1) On 52, n. 45, J.W. Thompson is cited because of his view that ὑπόστασις in Heb 3,14 is used with reference to the reality "on which the existence of the community rests in the same way that Christ is the reality of God (1:3)". This establishment of an analogy between the uses of ὑπόστασις in 1,3 and 3,14 is insightful, and may prove to be important for understanding the much vexed question of the nature of ὑπόστασις in Heb 11,1.2) On 53, n. 47, E. Nardoni is cited for his view that μέτοχοι at Heb 3,14 is a "nearly comprehensive salvific term" for the author of Hebrews. This view touches intimately on the interpretation of "salvation" (σωτηρία) in Hebrews, which is quite relevant for eschatology. 3) On 60, n.

79, V. Rhee is cited to the effect that the eternality of Jesus' high priesthood is attributable to the divine oath in 7,20-22, the eternality of Christ himself as indicated in 7,23-25, and the character, accomplishment and status of Christ as indicated in 7,26-28. This linking Heb 7 with the eternality of Christ is a key insight for any treatment of his priesthood as the focal point of his replacement of the Levitical priesthood.

Another achievement of this study is its contribution to the weakening of the argument which sees in Hebrews a Middle Platonic cosmological framework for eschatological musings (cf. 114-115, 160-164). Mackie maintains that "in spite of their well-documented roles as philosophical *termini technici*, Hebrews' employment of *σκία*, *εἰκὼν*, and *πρῶγμα* occurs within an essentially traditional Jewish framework".

This is certainly a balanced judgment based on the way the authoritative sources for the opinions of the author of Hebrews are grounded in the Old Testament. Mackie could perhaps have made his point still more clearly by saying that the author of Hebrews used Platonic terms to express non-Platonic meanings (if this, indeed, is Mackie's meaning). But if the terms as found in Hebrews are only accidentally related to the argument of the author of Hebrews, it seems that no recourse to Platonism is necessary in the first place: the author of Hebrews is simply taking words familiar to the addressees — all the words in question are amply documented in the Septuagint — and is using them in ways which fit his own meaning. (Here it may be useful to state that the author of Hebrews seems to be looking at the Old Testament in terms of Christ, not vice versa. Hence the use of Septuagint terms to express New Testament realities should not be a surprise. The meanings given to *ὑπόστασις* by the author of Hebrews are a case in point. How to ground such new meanings from the context of their use in Hebrews is one of the main challenges to any would-be interpreter of the epistle. Another example is the use of the word *πρόδρομος* in Heb 6,10 and its use of Christ as high priest preceding others into the Holy of Holies: nothing in the Old Testament cult prepares the way for this idea; a Septuagint word is used to illustrate a New Testament reality [cf. 207, n. 148]).

Another excellent point made by Mackie is his linking of the promise of offspring made to Abraham at the occasion of the Aqedah and cited by the author of Hebrews at 6,13-14, and the oath of Ps 110,4 cited at 7,19-22. But he minimizes the role of the oath to Abraham, thereby depriving himself of what seems to be the real point of the pairing of these two oaths: that the descendants promised to Abraham are realized in those redeemed by Christ. Here again the vantage point of the author of Hebrews should be emphasized: he is looking at Old Testament texts with New Testament faith.

Still another example of Mackie's insight is found in his discussion of salvation (*σωτηρία*). He notes that "only in 7:25 is salvation considered a present possession of the recipients". This is not the usual idea, which normally puts "salvation" off until an individual's death. But immediately after this sentence Mackie continues: "The remaining contexts [sc., of *σωτηρία* as used in Hebrews]: 2:10; 5:9; 7:25; 9:12, 15, 28, all emphasize the role Jesus the high priest plays in granting and facilitating salvific access to the community" (197). The implications of this insight are made explicit by Mackie in his subsequent discussion: "...in 9:28...the imagery of Jesus as

'salvific access provider' is stretched across the temporal divide of the two ages. ... Here the access imagery is transformed: salvation is depicted as a rescue from the present evil age, and conveyance into the coming age" (199). This function of Christ as heavenly high priest would seem to be at odds with the view to which Mackie seems to subscribe that the author of Hebrews is much more concerned about the fact that God reveals Christ to be son and high priest than he is about the points at which these titles are applicable (213).

Just how this salvific effect of the exalted Christ is realized in the here-and-now world is indicated by Mackie himself, though he does not exploit the insight. He notes (224, n. 45) that the word ἐκκλησία of Heb 2,12 is explained by the word οἶκος in Heb 3,1-6. But Heb 3,1-6 culminates in the observation that the Christians themselves constitute the house (i.e., church) under Christ. And this verse prepares the way for 3,14, where Christians are said to be "sharers" (μέτοχοι) in Christ. All of this indicates that the author of Hebrews is very much concerned to show how the heavenly priest Christ exercises influence on the citizens of the non-heavenly world in a cultic way. This would seem to explain why such persons are said to have a "heavenly calling" (cf. Heb 3,1).

Mackie emphasizes the heavenly nature of Christ's priesthood so much that he maintains that "Jesus did not occupy a priestly office in his lifetime" (214). He cites Heb 7,13-14 to support his view. But these verses only show that Jesus was not a priest of the tribe of Levi; they do not show that he did not occupy the office of a different type of priest in his lifetime. Mackie maintains that the official exercise of his priesthood did not begin until he offered himself as an obedient sacrificial victim. But Heb 10,5-10 portrays Jesus already at the moment of his coming into the world as offering his own body in place of the animal sacrifices of the Mosaic Law. Mackie's apparent dilemma seems to be based on his belief that Christ has to have only one stage in his priesthood. But the fact that even according to Mackie Christ exercised his priesthood on the cross as well as in heaven points to a different solution. Christ had a two-stage priesthood just as he had two types of body: an earthly priesthood corresponding to his earthly body, and his heavenly priesthood corresponding to his heavenly body. Christ's earthly priesthood began when he acquired an earthly body, i.e., at the moment of his entry into the world. The heavenly priesthood "perfects" (this seems to be the meaning of τελείωσις in the epistle) this earthly priesthood. This "perfecting" takes place at the moment when Jesus acquired a heavenly body, i.e., at the moment of his resurrection. (Mackie, like many another contemporary commentator on Hebrews, downplays the role of the resurrection of Christ in Hebrews. The word does not figure in the index of subjects.)

The conclusion of the entire study (231-232) left the distinct impression with the reviewer that for Mackie the priesthood of Christ encompasses the entire gamut of eschatological expectations of the author of Hebrews: in his earthly manifestation as priest Christ sacrifices himself, and in its heavenly reality the priesthood is a "cultic recasting" of Jesus' existence as something "entirely hortatory in nature" (231). All this seems to the reviewer to be a serious distortion of the eschatologies (for more than one can be spoken of) of the epistle. For there is an eschatology of the "Rest" awaiting God's people,

which is the goal of the Christian Exodus. And there is an eschatology of the “city” sought by Abraham and now near to the addressees. And there is the eschatology of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem which signals not the end of God’s relations with the Jews who did not accept Christ, but the end of the Sinai Covenant as God’s official arrangement governing his relations with mankind. And there is the eschatology of Christ’s entrance into heaven itself, which Christians share in this life by their participation in the Church. And there are other eschatologies as well, beyond the scope of a review to indicate. By blurring all these different themes of the epistle Mackie has failed to recognize the complicated nature of the message which the author of Hebrews intends to convey in his brilliant and highly unconventional language. Or so it seems to this reviewer.

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Varia

Ann E. KILLEBREW, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity*. An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines and Early Israel 1300-1100 B.C.E. (Archaeology and Biblical Studies), Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2005. xx-362 p. 15 × 23. \$ 39.95.

The debate on defining the ethnicity of ancient peoples on the basis of material culture has become more animated over the last ten years. The current trend of completely denying ethnicity — a recent interpretative approach not lacking solid methodological grounds — has led researchers to doubt the possibility of isolating real and proper “ethnic indicators” within the framework of material culture, indicators that used to be identified above all in some types of ceramic. The peoples mentioned in the Bible are no exception: and researchers are further encumbered by the stratified and multifaceted debate regarding whether biblical stories can be confirmed by archaeological findings.

Within this context, the book by Ann Killebrew upholds a renewed form of positivism, though not one devoid of doubts and accompanied by a balanced assessment of the latest methodological debates: the main driver of her research is the conviction “that ethnicity in its diverse manifestations can be identified under certain circumstances in the archaeological record” (2).

The researcher’s analysis focuses on the debated question of the origin of the Israelites, a topic that recent studies have also addressed from a broad historical perspective (M. Liverani, *Oltre la Bibbia. Storia antica di Israele* [Bari 2003]) or from a more specific viewpoint (W. Dever, *Who Were the*

Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From? [Grand Rapids, 2003]) in relation to biblical and extrabiblical texts as well as archaeological data. From the exclusively material culture approach, the issue was widely debated twenty years ago by I. Finkelstein in *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* (Jerusalem 1988), a book that had been an irreplaceable point of reference for a long time. However, it is to Ann Killebrew's credit that her book places the issue of the origin of the Israelites within a wider context of the ethnicity of the peoples mentioned in the Bible in relation to the shaping of Israel, peoples such as Egyptians, Canaanites and Philistines. Indeed, one of the most innovative aspects of the book is that it does not merely examine a single group but adopts a multi-focal approach.

The researcher focuses on the analysis of a particular phase, i.e. the transition phase between the Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age, and takes into consideration the whole of the complex period between the thirteenth century BCE and the beginning of eleventh century BCE in the southern Levant. The picture that emerges helps to reveal elements of continuity and discontinuity in material culture and focuses on ceramic artefacts, a subject this skilled field archaeologist is an expert in and can provide an exhaustive yet clear-cut overview of the shapes and types of the pottery recorded.

The methodological background is clearly set down in the introduction (1-19), that also conducts an exhaustive study on the most relevant theoretical trends in archaeology and supports the need to adopt integrated processual and postprocessual approaches. The former, called "New Archaeology", developed mainly in the 1960s and its scientifically based paradigms improved data collection, while the latter approach, developed in the 1980s as a reaction to the excessive positivism of processual archaeology, highlighted the importance of the archaeological context and the reassessment of the role of human behaviour within the social transformation processes. The author also explicitly refers to Braudel's historiographical paradigm approach articulated in "long term", "middle term" and "short term history", a mainstay of the *Annales* French school of thought, on the one hand, and, on the other, she also refers to the "world system" theory proposed by I. Wallerstein in the 1970s. Her decision to adopt a multidisciplinary approach and combine different suggestions and principles is valid, though at times this decision seems to hamper the pursuit of a single, autonomous and coherent methodological procedure in the careful examination of the various issues addressed.

The roots of the ethnogenesis of the Israelites and the appearance of the Philistines in the southern Levant can be found in the LB II and in particular in the thirteenth century BCE, in the so-called "age of internationalism", that is the main topic in the first chapter of the book (21-49). This is the age that saw the shaping of what was to be thereafter called the "biblical world". Some social and cultural phenomena, i.e. imperialism, ethnogenesis, and colonization processes, dating back to this period, are considered vital for the genesis and rise of biblical peoples, hence they have been studied also from a theoretical viewpoint.

Killebrew adopts a clear updated overview to describe the scenario present at the end of the Late Bronze Age in the southern Levant. This "reader-friendly" approach allows non-specialists to enter into the complex

issues, such as the development and subsequent crisis of the centralised system based on palace monopolies, the development of long-distance trade, the relations between core areas, periphery and semiperiphery, within a “global economy” (21-24).

The purely geographic use of the word “Canaanites” (43, n. 11), rather than a discussion on the ethnic connections of the groups that settled in the area called “Canaan” in the Late Bronze Age, is rather puzzling. The crucial elements that achieved unity in the Canaan region between the thirteenth and the beginning of twelfth centuries BCE are identified as Egyptian imperialistic power on the one hand, and the presence of a wide, far-reaching and international trade network on the other.

The irreversible crisis that rocked this internationalism-based system in the twelfth century is ascribed to various and varying causes by different researchers, be they external causes, such as invasions and migrations, natural disasters and climate change, or structural and internal ones, such as technological innovations, the collapse of the socio-economic system, or the cyclic alternation of urbanisation in the Palestine region. A long-term and processual perspective is certainly biased in favour of internal causes, yet the author is right to point out that none of these explanations by itself is sufficient to determine the socio-economic change that took place at the beginning of the new Iron Age.

The author devotes the second chapter (51-91) to the role of Egypt in Canaan through careful examination of Egyptian-style architectural styles (following C. Higginbotham’s analysis) and through the study of ceramics and Egyptian-like artefacts in the Levant. Ceramics help define clear social and cultural boundaries as “an ideal material culture case study of manifestations of imperialism” (51); the detailed typology (67-79) is largely based on material analysed by Killebrew in her PhD dissertation in 1999, focussing on the unpublished vases from Beth Shean. The shapes are clearly illustrated and divided into three main classifications (I, kitchen ware; II, containers; and III, various), this being very useful to specialists and non-specialists alike. It reveals the non-hybridisation of the items that seem to fully adhere “to both traditional Egyptian shapes and technology” (80). Egyptian-style vases were mostly produced locally in Palestine. However, provenance studies cited by Killebrew suggest that the slender storage containers (74-76, and fig. 2.16) were imported from Egypt. Today an indisputable benchmark is also the up-dated typology of amphorae in Egypt (D.A. Aston, «Amphorae in New Kingdom Egypt», *Ägypten und Levante* XIV [2004] 175-213).

In her critical evaluation of Egyptian presence in Canaan, Killebrew rejects the concepts of an “informal” or “economic imperialism”, also defined as “elite emulation” in Higginbotham’s terms, together with the idea of Egypt’s “direct rule” in Canaan, in favour of “formal” or “administrative” imperialism (55).

The definition of Canaanites as an “ethnic mosaic” (94) implies that the term “Canaan” is mainly used as a geographical description: the textual and archaeological data analysed in chapter three (93-148) lead to this conclusion, though the author is able to identify the boundaries of a single “Canaanite” material culture. Textual data come from sites such as Mari, Alalakh, Ugarit

and from Egypt (Amarna); biblical passages (Num 34,1-12; Ezek 47,13-20; 48,1-7; Josh 15,2-5; Josh 19,24-31) suggest that the geographical limits of Canaan more or less overlapped the borders reported in the texts of the second millennium BCE (96). In any case, as a result of the relative scarcity of textual evidence, the abundance of Canaanite material culture — in particular pottery — takes on an important interpretative role.

Typology classifications for palaces and temples are not easily obtained through analysis of architectural features. The typology for temples suggested by Amihai Mazar a decade ago is accepted by Killebrew, even if some of the interpretations have been criticised recently. In particular the concept of “irregular plan” — defining structures such as the *Fosse Temple* of Lachish (107) — is debated today as it is based on a *formalistic* type analysis and not a *content* type analysis (cf. I. Oggiano, «Categorie interpretative dell’architettura: gli edifici di culto del Levante del I millennio a.C.», *Archeologia e religione. Atti del I Colloquio* [eds. M. Rocchi – P. Xella] [Storia delle Religioni II; Roma 2006] 141-168, esp. 147-148). The pottery typology (110-138) represents one of the rare recent overviews of the corpus of Canaanite pottery.

Chapter four (149-196) provides a positive answer to the question of the degree of historical reliability of the events of the ancient Israelites (150). Killebrew takes an unbiased stance when comparing the Bible and archaeology. On the one hand she points out the presence of historical elements in biblical accounts, yet on the other she accepts the conclusions of some “more critical or skeptical analyses” (187, n. 16) related to the “minimalist” approach recently stigmatised by W.G. Dever (*What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* [Grand Rapids, 2001]). The ethnogenesis of the Israelites is explained by a gradual emergence from an ethnic identity to a “mixed multitude” (Exod 12,38). Killebrew adds the “mixed multitude theory”, based on archaeological evidence and the critical rereading of biblical texts, to the classic theories of the origin of the Israelites (181-183): i.e. the unified military conquest proposed by W.F. Albright and based on Joshua, the peaceful infiltration theory suggested by A. Alt in agreement with the book of Judges, Mendenhall and Gottwald’s social revolution theory, and finally the pastoral Canaanite theory (I. Finkelstein), based on the analysis of cyclic demographic processes. This approach reveals that the origins of Israel are to be found in a multi-ethnic indigenous mosaic (the rural population of Canaan, the nomadic groups, the fugitive slaves, the *‘apiru* and *shasu* of textual evidence), whose mingling was promoted by the decline of Egyptian imperialistic control in the twelfth century BCE.

In our opinion, it is more difficult to agree with the explanation of the origin of the Philistines provided in chapter five (197-245) as “intentional colonization” by groups coming from Cyprus or coastal Anatolia (201). In this part of the book, Killebrew distances herself most from processual archaeology: She rejects the New Archaeology’s propensity to causal explanation based on the “internal evolutionary developments” (200), together with all the various indigenist explanations, considered, albeit not entirely rightly, “based on out-dated archeological data” (235, n. 7). She prefers a diffusionist explanation, in line with the studies by T. Dothan, T. Barako, A. Mazar. The appearance of locally produced Aegean-style pottery

(Mycenaean IIIC:1b) is believed to herald the arrival of enterprising colonists (201), coming from areas with a prosperous economy (i.e. Cyprus).

“Colonialism”, whose conceptual basis the author analyses, according to P. Van Dommelen’s studies, is defined as a presence, in a certain territory, of foreign groups who set up asymmetric socio-economic relationships (200). This then leads to a second phase of creolization” that in the Philistine world is shown by the appearance of “bichrome” painted pottery (206).

The legacy of the formative phase, the Late Bronze II, is not taken lightly, as in Killebrew’s terms the large-scale migration of the Philistines in the twelfth century BCE is a natural continuation of the previous economic relations (201-206). Yet, the picture does not satisfactorily explain the appearance of Aegean-style pottery in the whole Levant, including the northern area (coastal and inland Syria, ‘Amuq, Cilicia), in the same period, a fact that can be ascribed to a more general context of changing trade patterns in the twelfth century BCE, according to S. Sherratt’s studies. Hopefully, this crucial phase of the history of the Levant will be analysed to the greatest possible extent from a “global” perspective and not from a purely southern Levant or Palestinian viewpoint. Besides, a revision of Iron Age chronology, with the introduction of the so-called “Low Chronology” proposed by I. Finkelstein, is instrumental in comparing evidence from Syria and Palestine. If this “Low Chronology” were adopted, it would lead to major parallelism with the absolute chronology of the northern Levant.

The conclusions in the sixth chapter (247-251) summarize some of the complex issues covered. Ultimately, Killebrew’s book is a brave and successful attempt to make archaeological evidence easily understood by biblical scholars and non-specialists alike. The constant comparison of textual evidence and data deduced from material culture shows how a multi-disciplinary and multifocal approach can be achieved by venturing into other fields in order to analyse sensitive issues, such as the ethnogenesis of the Israelites and the ethnicity of other biblical peoples.

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NUNTII PERSONARUM ET RERUM

“Come bisogna comportarsi nella casa di Dio” (1 Tm 3,15). L’etica delle lettere pastorali(*)

I. Prospettiva storico letteraria

Anche se il dibattito sull’autore delle lettere pastorali (=EP), mai chiuso, è stato riaperto recentemente in modo autorevole e utile da più voci, in particolare modo da L.T. Johnson e da Ph. Towner⁽¹⁾ che hanno criticato in modo acuto gli argomenti a favore della pseudepigrafia, rimango convinto del loro carattere deuteropaolino e della presenza di diversi tratti che le accomunano (lessico, formule, motivi, ecc.). Ricorderò dunque brevemente alcuni punti relativi all’ipotesi storico letteraria entro la quale si colloca il mio intervento.

Nelle EP, scritte probabilmente verso la svolta del primo secolo dopo Cristo, in Asia Minore, si rilevano quattro preoccupazioni che caratterizzano il contesto comunicativo della loro redazione.

La preoccupazione della durata del tempo che passa. L’autore, con il passare del tempo, sente con forza la necessità, di rinnovare concretamente la fedeltà all’apostolo tenendo conto delle mutate circostanze della terza generazione cristiana⁽²⁾. Il tempo che passa diventa anche tempo necessario ad una buona scelta dei ministri (1 Tm 3,6.10; 5,22), alla formazione di base del giovane leader (2 Tm 3,3-5.11.15), all’esercizio della pietà (*eusebeia* 1 Tm 4,7-8). Tempo anche sedimentato in comunità percepite secondo le generazioni e le età (2 Tm 1,5; 1 Tm 5,1-16; Tt 2,2-10).

La fedeltà all’apostolo viene minacciata, ed è questa la seconda preoccupazione, dal diffondersi, anche all’interno delle comunità, di insegnamenti di falsi dottori che mettono in pericolo, non solo la dottrina, ma anche l’ordine domestico. Questi conflitti di insegnamento, che coinvolgono il comportamento, sono tanto più pericolosi per l’equilibrio comunitario dal momento che le comunità sono già esposte a certe tensioni a causa della loro crescita numerica e della loro diversificazione sociale ed economica.

Questa evoluzione è il terzo ordine di preoccupazioni: c’è diversità di si-

(*) This article represents the lecture given at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome on May 21, 2008 in connection with the ‘Joseph Gregory McCarthy Professorship’ held by the Author.

(1) L.T. JOHNSON, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates*. 1Timothy, 2Timothy, Titus (Valley Forge, PA 1996); ID., *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (AB 35A; New York 2001); P.H. TOWNER, *The letters to Timothy and Titus* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge 2006); cfr. anche C.M. PRIOR, *Paul the Letter Writer and the Second Letter to Timothy* (JStNT Suppl 23; Sheffield 1989); J. MURPHY-O’CONNOR, “2 Timothy Contrasted with 1 Timothy and Titus”, *RB* 98 (1991) 403-418; I.H. MARSHALL, in collaboration with P.H. TOWNER, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh 1999).

(2) Cfr. 2 Tm 1,5.

tuaZIONI per gli schiavi (padrone pagano, padrone cristiano), situazioni diverse di vedove giovani o anziane, con o senza famiglia; diversità tra i più ricchi ed i più poveri; diversità proposte dalle donne che insegnano. La cura dell'ordine e della buona gestione impregna le istruzioni e le esortazioni impartite a Timoteo e a Tito.

Infine — quarta preoccupazione — le comunità sanno di essere osservate e si preoccupano dell'immagine comunicata a quelli di fuori. Il vescovo che rappresenta la comunità deve “godere di buona testimonianza da quelli di fuori” (1 Tm 3,7). L'esortazione agli schiavi viene motivata in modo analogo, “stimino i loro padroni degni di ogni onore, perché il nome di Dio e la dottrina non vengano bestemmiiati” (1 Tm 6,1), così come si esorta le donne giovani ad “essere sagge, caste, diligenti nei lavori domestici, buone, sottomesse ai loro mariti, perché la parola di Dio non sia disprezzata” (Tt 2,5). Infine Tito stesso deve avere un comportamento esemplare “perché l'avversario resti confuso, non avendo nulla di male da dire contro di noi” (Tt 2,8). Per le pastorali l'etica è anche comunicazione, visibilità sociale. L'immagine comunitaria deve essere quella di buoni cittadini. Come inserirsi in questa società romano-ellenistica che comincia ad accorgersi dell'esistenza dei cristiani? La questione appare tanto più pressante dal momento che le prime testimonianze pagane sul cristianesimo fanno pensare ad uno sguardo perlomeno sospettoso. Plinio il Giovane, nel parlare dei cristiani sui quali indaga, si esprime così: “Altri, presi della stessa follia...”; mentre Tacito, quando riporta l'accusa di Nerone a proposito dell'incendio di Roma, indica “coloro che il volgo chiamava Chrestiani, come odiosi per le loro nefandezze”⁽³⁾.

La chiesa è una grande casa, la casa di Dio (*oikos theou*). Questa convinzione è alla base dell'ecclesiologia, della comprensione dell'etica delle pastorali e del rapporto della comunità con la società che la circonda⁽⁴⁾. Però, più che di una descrizione, fondata per esempio sull'esperienza delle chiese domestiche, si tratta piuttosto di una risposta alle preoccupazioni ricordate sopra: uno sforzo di ridefinizione dell'autocoscienza ecclesiale sul registro

⁽³⁾ Plinio il Giovane, *Epist.* 10,96, lettera a Traiano; Tacito *Annali* 15,44,2-5, citati in R. PENNA, *Ambiente socio culturale delle origini cristiane* (Bologna 1986) 274-275.

⁽⁴⁾ Sul motivo della “casa”: E. DASSMANN, “Hausgemeinde und Bischofsamt”, *JAC.E* 11 (1984) 82-97; M. GIELEN, *Tradition und Theologie neutestamentlicher Haustafelethik: ein Beitrag zur Frage einer christlichen Auseinandersetzung mit gesellschaftlichen Normen* (Frankfurt am Main 1990) 68-103; H.J. KLAUCK, *Hausgemeinde und Hauskirche im frühen Christentum* (Stuttgart 1981); F. LAUB, “Sozialgeschichtlicher Hintergrund und ekklesiologische Relevanz der neutestamentlich - frühchristlichen Haus- und Gemeindefabeln. Ein Beitrag zur Soziologie des Frühchristentum”, *MThZ* 37 (1986) 249-271; D. LUEHRMANN, “Neutestamentliche Haustafeln und antike Oekonomie”, *NTS* 27 (1981) 83-97; E. SCHLARB, *Die gesunde Lehre. Häresie und Wahrheit im Spiegel der Pastoralbriefe* (Marburger theologische Studien 28; Marburg 1990) 316-342; G. SCHOELLGEN, “Hausgemeinden, ‘Oikos-Ekklesiologie’ und monarchischer Episkopat”, *JbAC* 31 (1988) 74-90; D.C. VERNER, *The Household of God and the Social World of the Pastoral Epistles* (Chico, CA 1983); U. WAGENER, *Die Ordnung des ‘Hauses Gottes’* (WUNT 2/65; Tübingen 1994); A. WEISER, “Evangelisierung im ‘Haus’”, *BZ* 34 (1990) 63-86; ID., “Die Kirche in den Pastoralbriefen. Ordnung um jeden Preis?” *BibKirch* 46 (1991) 107-113; cfr. anche K.H. BIERITZ — Ch. KAEHLER — G. LANCZKOWSKI — F. WERNER, “Haus” I-III, *TRE* 14 (1985) 474-492, E. DASSMANN — G. SCHOELLGEN, “Haus II (Hausgemeinschaft)”, *RAC* 13 (1986) 801-905.

domestico per rinsaldare la fiducia e la stabilità minacciata dalla complessità crescente e dalla conflittualità nelle comunità.

II. La casa, unità di base della società antica

La casa deve il suo successo come metafora anche al fatto di essere il luogo più concreto e più immediato, l'unità di base della città antica⁽⁵⁾. La famiglia-casa è costituita da relazioni di interdipendenza e di subordinazione. Oltre che della famiglia in senso stretto, il capo famiglia è responsabile degli schiavi, degli ex-schiavi diventati clientes, dei lavoratori stipendiati o associati. Il padrone di casa governa l'economia e le persone per il bene dell'insieme.

Tracce di questa organizzazione sono reperibili nella struttura materiale della casa come appare per esempio negli scavi di Pompei: camere private, uffici del padrone di casa, area per le donne e i figli, alloggi per gli schiavi, magazzini verso la strada (foresterie?), e al centro la sala da pranzo come luogo di incontro. Questa architettura ha anche la funzione di rinforzare lo statuto sociale del padrone di casa, iscrivendo nella topografia della casa le differenze e le distinzioni tra i diversi ruoli e diversi gruppi che la compongono.

Accanto alla sua funzione economica (in senso moderno) la casa è il luogo della pratica religiosa. Sotto la responsabilità del suo padrone, la casa svolge anche un compito educativo verso tutti suoi membri — non solo i figli, anche i servi. La formazione di colui o colei che svolge le funzioni di economo è particolarmente curata. Tocca alla padrona di casa, o a chi per lei, introdurre le ragazze e le serve alle attività domestiche.

La casa offre una qualche sicurezza e un'appartenenza. Esserne parte è potere collocarsi e svolgere un ruolo in una rete relazionale non solo verticale (gerarchica), ma anche orizzontale (parentele, amicizie). Per l'individuo questa appartenenza è anche una mediazione verso l'esterno.

Oltre che nell'archeologia o nell'epigrafia⁽⁶⁾, riferimenti alla casa —

⁽⁵⁾ Per D. LUEHRMANN, "Haustafeln", 88-89, parlare di una "società della casa" ("Oikosgesellschaft") offre, tra altri vantaggi, quello di descrivere nello stesso tempo l'aspetto economico (la ricerca dell'*autarchia* economica) e quello sociale, e permette di usare una categoria dell'epoca senza fare intervenire espressioni moderne quali "schiavista" o "classi". W.A. MEEKS, *The First Urban Christians. The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven, CT 1983) 29: "...it (the house) was the basic unit in the establishment of Christianity in the city, as it was, indeed, the basic unit of the city itself"; D.L. BALCH — J.E. STAMBAUGH, *The Social World of the First Christians* (London 1986) 123. Dionigi di Alicarnasso, *Ant. Rom.*, 2,24-27, dove la città appare costituita da case. LUEHRMANN, "Haustafeln", 88; VERNER, *Household* 27-79; H. VON LIPS, *Glaube, Gemeinde, Amt. Zum Verständnis der Ordination in den Pastoralbriefen* (FRLANT 122; Göttingen 1979) 126.

⁽⁶⁾ VERNER, *Household*, 55-57: se nelle classi agiate della società la casa è una grande entità economica, nella quale la donna può svolgere un certo ruolo, e dove gli schiavi sono di diverse centinaia, i meno abbienti vivevano, ad Ostia per esempio, in "*insulae*", palazzi di più piani con numerosi appartamenti. W. ELLIGER, *Ephesos. Geschichte einer antiken Weltstadt* (Stuttgart 1985) 71-73, descrive case dell'élite di Efeso di notevole dimensioni; vedi anche GIELEN, *Haustafelethik*, 86-88. Gielen, alla luce degli studi archeologici, si chiede se certe case di Corinto erano in grado di offrire uno spazio sufficiente ad accogliere "tutta" la comunità locale e non solo comunità domestiche. Vedi anche C. OSIEK — D. BALCH, *Families in the New Testament World. Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY 1997); P. TREBILCO, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Tübingen 2004).

alla sua struttura sociale, a suoi ruoli, a suoi problemi, alla sua gestione — si trovano in tutti gli scritti filosofici del mondo greco-romano⁽⁷⁾. Più specificamente, gli scritti sull'economia, destinati ai padroni di casa, riflettono sulla gestione ragionevole delle persone e delle cose nell'ambito della realtà domestica.

III. La casa e il primo sviluppo del cristianesimo

Anche per il Cristianesimo, prima di essere una metafora, la casa è la realtà materiale fondamentale del suo sviluppo nelle città dell'Impero. Le "case" vengono battezzate (1 Cor 1,16; 16,15-16), sono i luoghi d'incontro e di appartenenza della comunità (1 Cor 16,19; cf Rm 16,5; Fm 2; Col 4,15): "Salutate quelli della casa Aristobulo... Salutate quelli della casa Narciso" (Rm 16,10-11). Questa centralità della casa viene confermata negli Atti, dove tutti i grandi momenti dell'inizio della storia cristiana avvengono in casa: dal raduno degli apostoli per l'elezione di Mattia (At 1,13.26) alla conversione di Cornelio (At 10 e 11), alla casa di Lidia (At 16,40), passando per la Pentecoste (At 2,1-2.46). Per perseguire la Chiesa, il futuro Paolo deve andare "di casa in casa" (At 8,3). E in una casa verrà ratificata la sua conversione (At 9,11.17)⁽⁸⁾.

Base della vita comunitaria e della missione, la casa adempie ad una funzione essenziale. Permette materialmente lo svolgimento del culto, il raduno dei credenti, l'alloggio dei missionari, offre dei collaboratori per l'evangelizzazione, un riparo, dei mezzi di sussistenza. Il successo della missione paulina e la diffusione del Cristianesimo di città in città sono senz'altro legati alla conversione non solo di individui, ma di case intere, che fornirono alla nuova fede dei luoghi e degli spazi. Anche se sono una minoranza nella comunità (1 Cor 1,26), i padroni di casa svolgeranno un ruolo preminente nello sviluppo del movimento⁽⁹⁾. Quanti provengono dai ceti più agiati — il possesso di una casa presuppone una certa ricchezza — possono viaggiare e accedere a certi incarichi. Il vescovo di 1 Tm 3,1-3 è un buon padrone di casa.

Luogo d'incontro e di diffusione del primo Cristianesimo, luogo della vita quotidiana, non c'è da meravigliarsi se la casa sia diventata luogo di tensione e oggetto di parènesi specifiche (cfr. i codici domestici di Col 3,17-4,1; Ef 5,20-6,9-10; 1 Pt 2,11-3,9; vedi sotto). Nelle EP la casa diventa anche terreno di concorrenza tra gruppi interni alla fede cristiana⁽¹⁰⁾.

⁽⁷⁾ Platone, *Protagora*, 319. Protagora presenta il suo insegnamento in due parti: da un lato, sapere come amministrare al meglio gli affari della propria casa, e dall'altro guadagnare il più potere possibile negli affari dello stato. Vedi anche Senofonte, *Economico*, tradotto in latino da Cicerone nel 85 A.C.

⁽⁸⁾ La casa del carceriere di Filippi in 16,31-34; quella di Crispo, capo sinagoga a Corinto 18,8; in Rm 16,14-15: tre case senza menzione dei loro capi; 1 Cor 1,11 quella di Cloe; Fil 4,22 quella di Cesare.

⁽⁹⁾ Cfr. l'episodio di Giasone a Tessalonica in At 17,5-9; MEEKS, *Christians*, 76; membri della comunità di Corinto battezzati da Paolo: Crispo (1 Cor 1,14 e At 18,8), Gaio (1 Cor 1,14 e 16,23) e Stefana (1 Cor 1,16a e 16,15), tre padroni di casa, cfr. GIELEN, *Hausstafethik*, 80-82.

⁽¹⁰⁾ 2 Tm 3,6; Tt 1,11; 1 Tm 5,13.

IV. Uso descrittivo e uso metaforico del motivo della casa

Nelle EP, i termini del gruppo “oikos” (“casa/famiglia”, 18x) designano da un lato la casa come luogo dell’organizzazione concreta della vita, per collocarvi la parentesi del quotidiano (uso descrittivo del motivo della casa 1 Tm 3,4.5.12; 5,4.8.13-14; 2 Tm 1,15; 3,6; 4,20; Tt 1,11; 2,4), e dall’altro esprimono relazioni teologiche e ecclesiologiche (*oikonomia theou* “ordine secondo la volontà di Dio” 1 Tm 1,4; *oikos theou* “casa di Dio” 1 Tm 3,15; *oikonomos theou* “amministratore di Dio” Tt 1,7; l’immagine della grande casa in 2 Tm 2,20).

Quando si indica come criterio di scelta del vescovo la gestione corretta della propria casa e la buona educazione dei figli, — 1 Tm 3,4-5: “che governi bene la propria famiglia/casa (τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον) e tenga i figli sottomessi e pienamente rispettosi. Se uno non sa governare la propria famiglia/casa (τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προστῆναι), come potrà aver cura (ἐπιμελήσεται) della chiesa di Dio?” (idem per il diacono in 3,12) — si usa un’analogia molto diffusa nel mondo greco-romano, secondo la quale solo chi sa gestire la propria casa è in grado di gestire la “cosa pubblica”⁽¹⁾.

Questa analogia ci introduce alla funzione della metaforizzazione della casa. La prima parte dell’analisi si riferisce alla casa/famiglia del candidato vescovo, mentre la seconda suggerisce già la metafora. La *polis* o la chiesa di Dio sono delle case da gestire.

La casa del vescovo però non è solo descritta. Di più: è oggetto di esortazione. Deve essere governata secondo le attese e le regole della “morale domestica”: casa ben ordinata, rispetto e sottomissione dei figli, una sola donna/moglie, e tante qualità, moderazione, dignità, sobrietà, capacità educativa e senso dell’ospitalità... Ed è questo registro di valori prescrittivi, questo “ordine della casa”, che viene trasferito alla comunità ecclesiale attraverso la metaforizzazione del motivo.

Quando parlo di “uso descrittivo” del motivo della casa, intendo certo un riferimento a delle case/famiglie concrete e reali, già valutate però alla luce dei valori dell’ordine domestico. La metaforizzazione del motivo è il trasferimento di questi valori nella visione della comunità ecclesiale.

Per esempio, in Tt 1,7, il fatto di prescrivere che il vescovo sia irreprensibile, come amministratore (econo) di Dio (ἀνεγκλητον εἶναι ὡς θεοῦ οἰκονόμου) non arrogante, non collerico, non dedito al vino, non violento, non avido di vile guadagno (μὴ ἀσχροκερδῆ), risponde in anticipo alla descrizione in Tt 1,11 dell’azione destabilizzante degli avversari, che sconvolgono intere famiglie/case (ὅλους οἴκου ἀνατρέπουσιν), insegnando cose che non dovrebbero, per amore di un guadagno disonesto (αἰσχροῦς κέρδους χάριν).

⁽¹⁾ Seneca, *Clem.* 1,9; Tacito, *Agr.* 19; Pseudo-Isocrate, *Ad Demonicum* 35; Plutarco, *Lyc.* 19; rif. in VON LIPS, *Glaube*, 127; N. BROX, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (RNT 7/2; Regensburg 1969) 145-146; M. DIBELIUS – H. CONZELMAN, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (HNT 13; Tübingen 1955) 43-44.; J. ROLOFF, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* (EKK XV; Zürich – Neukirchen – Vluyn 1988) 159, n. 252; SCHLARB, *Lehre*, 339-342; LUEHRMANN, “Haustafeln”, 90.

V. La casa "descritta"

Nelle EP la terminologia della casa/famiglia designa il luogo concreto dell'organizzazione quotidiana, dove si vive l'esigenza etica.

A parte la casa/famiglia del vescovo o del diacono, che deve essere ben gestita (1 Tm 3,4.5.12), l'autore ricorda a proposito delle vedove il dovere fondamentale di avere cura di "quelli della propria casa" (5,4.8), cioè di non fare pesare sulla comunità il mantenimento di una vedova che i figli o i nipoti potrebbero mantenere. In 1 Tm 5,13s le giovani vedove sono invitate a risposarsi, "a governare la loro casa", per evitare che l'ozio le porti ad andare in giro "per le case" a chiacchierare di cose sbagliate. In Tt 2,4 sono le donne anziane che devono insegnare alle giovani ad amare mariti e figli (essere *philandroi* e *philoteknoi*). Come abbiamo visto, le case sono anche bersaglio dei falsi dottori che "le sconvolgono" (Tt 1,11), vi "si insinuano e circuiscono" donne attratte dal loro ("falso") sapere (2 Tm 3,6).

In 2 Tm 1,16, Paolo invoca la misericordia di Dio sulla casa di Onesiforo, che menzionerà ancora nei saluti finali (2 Tm 4,19).

In questa prima serie di riferimenti, la terminologia della casa indica la famiglia come luogo di relazioni domestiche, ciò che oggi potremmo chiamare "il privato", ma che allora ricopriva, come abbiamo visto, uno spazio sociale molto più esteso. Va notato che, se si eccettuano i due riferimenti alla casa di Onesiforo, offerta come esempio positivo all'inizio e alla fine di 2 Tm, la casa è il luogo di un *test* dove si confrontano tre gruppi: il leader della comunità (Timoteo o Tito, ministro, vescovo o diacono), le donne (giovani, vedove o non), e i falsi dottori, gli insegnanti dell'altra dottrina (1 Tm 1,3; 6,3)⁽¹²⁾.

Nelle comunità cristiane da più di una generazione, l'educazione, la trasmissione della fede e dei valori passa "naturalmente" attraverso le case (cfr. la fede della nonna Loide e la madre Eunice che adesso è anche quella di Timoteo 2 Tm 1,5). Sarà dunque vitale per l'autore eliminare le interferenze: le vedove giovani oziose, che vanno "attorno per le case (*περιερχόμενοι τὰς οἰκίας*); e non soltanto [sono] oziose, ma anche pettegole e curiose, parlando di cose delle quali non si deve parlare (*λαλοῦσαι τὰ μὴ δεόντα*)" (1 Tm 5,13-14), oppure gli avversari che trovano nelle case orecchi femminili e creano disordine (2 Tm 3,6; Tt 1,11).

Il testo si riferisce alla casa descritta per indicare il luogo di una sfida ecclesiastica e dell'esercizio di una "morale domestica" teorizzata, come abbiamo visto, per la scelta dei ministri tra coloro che tengono le loro case sotto controllo (1 Tm 3,2.4.5.12).

⁽¹²⁾ Cfr. la situazione triangolare caratteristica degli Atti apocrifi degli apostoli: delle donne di alto rango sono convinte dalla predicazione (encratica) dell'apostolo e si rifiutano al loro marito, o fidanzato, uomo influente nella città. Di conseguenza l'apostolo sarà perseguitato, cfr. F. BOVON, "La vie des apôtres, traditions bibliques et narrations apocryphes", *Les Actes apocryphes des apôtres* (éd. F. BOVON et al.) (Genève 1981) 143. Questa dialettica a tre proseguirà nei secoli, vedi G. DUBY, *Le Chevalier, la Femme et le Prêtre. Le mariage dans la France féodale* (Paris 1981); Ch. DUQUOC, *La femme, le clerc et le laïc* (EL 4; Genève 1989).

VI. La casa metafora

Un secondo gruppo di riferimenti alla terminologia domestica esprime metaforicamente relazioni teologiche ed ecclesiali.

In 1 Tm 1,4, le favole e le genealogie senza fine dei falsi dottori suscitano controversie e discussioni invece di promuovere la realtà ordinata secondo Dio, che è fondata sulla fede (οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει 1 Tm 1,4, "God's way of ordering things" secondo Johnson). Sia la struttura sociale (le relazioni familiari e domestiche – 1 Tm 2,8-15; 5,1-2,3-16; 6,1-2; Tt 2,2-10) che il mondo della creazione (1 Tm 4,1-5) sono da pensare in continuità a partire da questo ordine del mondo secondo il disegno di Dio, ordine che i falsi dottori rifiutano. Se la chiesa si attiene a questo ordine, che richiede un comportamento coerente, allora diventa "casa di Dio" (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ 1 Tm 3,15).

Oppure la chiesa è la grande casa con dei vasi di diverse qualità (Ἐν μεγάλῃ δὲ οἰκίᾳ 2 Tm 2,20). Oppure ancora, il già citato vescovo come "economo di Dio" (θεοῦ οἰκονόμος Tt 1,7)⁽¹³⁾ invitato ad essere irreprensibile.

La metafora della casa si sviluppa in due direzioni, come "edificio" e come "famiglia", "spazio sociale".

1. Casa edificio

A differenza del motivo protopaolino del tempio escatologico nel quale si ha a che fare con Dio stesso⁽¹⁴⁾, nelle Pastorali il lato "edificio" si esprime come "colonna, base, fondamento" posto da Dio e sostegno della verità. Connota la costanza e la continuità. Comunica fiducia. "la casa di Dio, che è la chiesa del Dio vivente"⁽¹⁵⁾, colonna e sostegno della verità (στῦλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας) (1 Tm 3,15). Tuttavia il solido fondamento di Dio rimane fermo (στερεὸς θεμέλιος τοῦ θεοῦ ἔστηκεν – 2 Tm 2,19-20). In una grande casa (Ἐν μεγάλῃ δὲ οἰκίᾳ) non ci sono soltanto vasi d'oro e d'argento, ma anche vasi di legno e di terra; e gli uni sono destinati a un uso nobile e gli altri a un uso ignobile." In ultima istanza, la solidità dell'edificio/chiesa dipende da Dio e non viene "resa fragile" dalla debolezza dei credenti. È solida in quanto la verità è in essa⁽¹⁶⁾.

Il legame tra chiesa e verità non è solo costitutivo, è anche comunica-

⁽¹³⁾ Le EP, usando qui una terminologia già "cristiana", ne rafforzano il carattere domestico. L'economo è una figura nelle parabole (Lc 12,42.16-18), appare in 1 Co 4,1s per indicare la funzione apostolica. Le qualità principali e necessari ad un economo sono la fedeltà al padrone, la buona fama, l'affidabilità, virtù spesso menzionate nelle EP (1 Tm 1,11.12; 2 Tm 2,2; 4,7; Tt 1,3).

⁽¹⁴⁾ 2 Cor 6,16; 1 Cor 3,11; Ef 2,20; per il motivo a Qûmran: 1QH VI 25-28; 1QS V 6; CD VII 15; XX 10.13.

⁽¹⁵⁾ L'espressione "Dio vivente" indica, secondo il pensiero dell'AT, la contrapposizione con le divinità senza vita (cf. 2 Cor 3,3; 6,16; 1 Ts 1,9; 1 Tm 4,10; Ap 14,15). Per C. SPICQ, *Les Epîtres pastorales* (Paris 1969) *ad loc.*, dovrebbe correggere una certa staticità della metafora della casa santuario.

⁽¹⁶⁾ V. HASLER, *Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus (Pastoralbriefe)* (ZBK.NT 12; Zürich 1978) 29; ROLOFF, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 199-200; SPICQ, *Les Epîtres pastorales*, 467; il senso è vicino a colui presente nell'autocomprensione della setta di Qumran: 1QS VIII 5.8, "Il Consiglio della comunità sarà confermato nella verità... i suoi fonda-

zione. La colonna non è solo funzionale all'edificio, ne è segnale verso l'esterno⁽¹⁷⁾. Rende conto per il mondo della verità che la fonda, verità cristologica espressa nell'inno di 1 Tm 3,16 "predicato alle nazioni, fu creduto nel mondo."

La metafora dell'edificio è diffusa negli scritti del NT, con la differenza (con le pastorali) che l'edificio, o parte di esso, sono i destinatari stessi del discorso. "Tu sei Pietro e su questa Pietra..." Mt 16,18; "Siete l'edificio di Dio" 1 Cor 3,9-10; "siete il tempio di Dio" 1 Cor 3,16; "voi siete insieme edificati per essere una dimora di Dio nello Spirito" Ef 2,22; Eb 3,6: "ma Cristo, come Figlio, lo è sopra la propria casa e la sua casa siamo noi"; 1 Pt 2,5: "anche voi, come pietre viventi, siete edificati per formare una casa spirituale".

In questi testi Dio è il costruttore, o l'abitante, i credenti la casa in costruzione o già edificata, il tempio escatologico. In 1 Tm 3,14-15 e 2 Tm 2,19-20 invece, le sfumature sono diverse. In maniera significativa i credenti non sono più la casa, o parte del suo materiale, sono "nella casa". La casa di Dio non esprime più in modo immediato l'identità del credente, ma delimita lo spazio sociale da abitare in un certo modo: il come comportarsi nella casa di Dio. Spazio da abitare in un certo modo, l'appartenenza si presenta come esortazione etica, alla perseveranza, alla costanza. E questo ci porta al secondo aspetto della metafora.

2. L'ordine della casa

Se l'indicativo teologico è garantito dalla solidità dell'edificio, colonna di verità, il cui fondamento è stato posto da Dio, l'imperativo etico viene richiesto dal buon ordine di quella casa/famiglia. La metafora della casa di Dio come casa/famiglia interviene laddove Paolo usava la metafora del Corpo (1 Co 12,4-11.12-27; 14,26-28; Rm 12,5-8). L'etica delle pastorali non sarà né una morale delle virtù, benché siano spesso menzionate, né la ripresa dell'appello alla libertà responsabile della fede, che Paolo contrappone a chi vuole reintrodurre le opere della legge (Gal). L'etica delle Pastorali si presenta come una morale sociale, una morale "topologica" per cui il comportamento è riferito ai diversi luoghi della vita quotidiana ed al posto che ciascuno vi occupa: nella casa privata, nella chiesa "casa di Dio", in relazione alla società, che guarda e giudica (1 Tim 3,7; Tt 2,5.8.10).

In questa prospettiva le EP riprendono e reinterpretano le esortazioni dei

menta non tremeranno"; 1QS IX 3-4: 1 "istituzione dello Spirito è fondata sulla verità" (ibid. 34); ci si sente incrollabile in quanto radicato nella verità.

(17) Certi ritengono l'espressione un'apposizione a Dio, altri la mettono in relazione a Timoteo, soggetto del verbo sapere, con argomenti letterari. Nella letteratura greca "colonna" può indicare un uomo, solido, d'appoggio per altri, per un'istituzione (Ettore, colonna invincibile e incrollabile di Troia, Pindaro, *Olimpiche* II,146); nell'AT, Gr 1,18 indica la funzione del profeta in modo analogo (cfr. anche Si 26,24; 14,4; Pr 9,1); in 4 M 17,3, i Maccabei sono delle colonne per la madre; nel rabbinismo *Ex.Rab.* 2,6, Abramo è colonna del mondo; infine Giacomo, Cefa e Giovanni sono anche loro delle colonne in Ga 2,9. SPICQ, *Les Epîtres pastorales*, 466, che indica questi riferimenti, attribuisce l'espressione alla chiesa sulla base del contesto (cfr. anche VON LIPS, *Glaube*, 95, n. 5). Per quanto riguarda ἐδραιώμα, ROLOFF, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 199-200 rileva che il termine è assente dal greco profano.

codici domestici che troviamo in Ef 5,21-6,9, Col 3,18-4,1, 1 Pt 2,13-3,7 dove le tre copie di “partner” domestici — moglie e marito, figli e genitori, schiavi e padroni — sono invitati ad armonizzare i loro rapporti in una certa reciprocità. Ma a differenza delle pastorali appunto nei codici domestici la casa non è metafora, è la casa della vita quotidiana, e le relazioni oggetto dell’esortazione sono le relazioni domestiche concrete dove il marito, padre e padrone è lo stesso padrone di casa al quale è bene essere sottomessi, ma che, a sua volta, deve esercitare la sua autorità domestica con rispetto, amore, senza violenza⁽¹⁸⁾.

Nelle pastorali la comprensione metaforica della chiesa come “casa di Dio” allarga l’applicazione delle relazioni domestiche e fa dell’istituzione comunitaria sempre più il vero luogo d’appartenenza per i suoi membri. I “codici domestici” vengono usati con altri tipi di elenchi (profili professionali, cataloghi di doveri, di vizi, di virtù). I destinatari delle istruzioni non sono limitati alle coppie della reciprocità domestica (moglie-marito; bambini-genitori; schiavi-padroni), sono tutti i membri della comunità, identificati secondo il ruolo, il sesso, l’età (vescovi, diaconi, anziani di chiesa, vedove, uomini e donne, anziani e giovani, schiavi, 1 Tm 2,1-6,2; Tt 1,6-9; 2,2-10). Tutti trattati secondo l’ordine domestico come una casa/famiglia.

Così, gli stessi termini esprimono le relazioni nella casa “privata” e nella comunità.

Lo stesso verbo (ποιοῦσθαι) viene usato per “governare la casa” (1 Tm 3,4.12) e “tenere la presidenza” nella comunità (1 Tm 5,17).

- a. Sottomissione e rispetto sono richiesti alla sposa, agli schiavi e ai figli (Tt 2,5.9; 1 Tm 3,4), ma anche alle donne nell’assemblea pubblica (1 Tm 2,11) sia nell’una che nell’altra (1 Tm 2,11; 3,4; 4,12; 6,2; Tt 1,9-10; 2,5.9.15).
- b. I termini usati per esortare gli schiavi a non contraddire o disprezzare i loro padroni (Tt 2,9; 1 Tm 6,2), sono ripresi per descrivere l’atteggiamento degli eretici verso la direzione della chiesa (i “contraddittori” Tt 1,9)⁽¹⁹⁾ o per esortare la comunità nella sua relazione con Timoteo o Tito, leader ai quali è dovuto il rispetto (“Nessuno disprezzi la tua giovane età” 1 Tm 4,12; “Nessuno ti disprezzi” Tt 2,15).
- c. Di grande importanza nelle EP è la terminologia dell’insegnamento. Come abbiamo detto, nel mondo greco-romano il luogo dell’educazione e dell’istruzione è la casa. L’analogia ministro / padrone di casa se ne

⁽¹⁸⁾ Un’ipotesi recente, ed abbastanza convincente, vede in questi codici una rielaborazione cristiana di tematiche contenute nella letteratura “economica” destinata ai padroni di casa. Presente in diversi trattati e frammenti, dall’epoca di Platone fino al quarto secolo della nostra era, questo tipo di discorso mira alla gestione ragionevole delle cose e delle persone nell’ambito di un’economia domestica. Parti integranti del bagaglio culturale dei padroni di casa cristiani (gruppo minoritario, ma importante), queste tematiche sono riprese per affrontare certe tensioni, che hanno per teatro la casa. Diversamente dai modelli pagani le istruzioni di Ef, Col e 1 Pt si rivolgono a tutti e non solo ai padroni di casa, richiamano alla reciprocità, relativizzano il potere domestico, sottoponendolo alla Signoria di Cristo. Sono indizi del fatto che l’approccio fortemente ugualitario, con il quale la prima generazione cristiana aveva pensato l’integrazione dei vari gruppi sociali (Ga 3,28) non è del tutto dimenticato.

⁽¹⁹⁾ “Contraddire” l’insegnamento: 2 Tm 3,8; 4,3.15.

troverà rinforzata. Timoteo e Tito, figure del ministro, hanno il compito di educare ed istruire. Le qualità di fermezza e di dolcezza, di autorevolezza e la capacità didattica sono sia del padrone di casa che del ministro della comunità⁽²⁰⁾. 1 Tm 5,1-2: "Non riprendere con asprezza l'uomo anziano, ma esortalo come si esorta un padre; i giovani, come fratelli; le donne anziane, come madri; le giovani, come sorelle, in tutta purezza." Il passo è significativo, Timoteo, delegato dall'apostolo e figura del ministro, non viene identificato però con il padre anziano bensì con il figlio, fratello in quanto sembra che le pastorali propendano per un leadership giovane (1 Tm 4,12; 2 Tm 2,22; Tt 2,7). La morale domestica viene sì ripresa, però reinterpretata secondo la nuova prospettiva.

- d. All'attività d'insegnamento che caratterizza gran parte del compito del ministro risponde l'atteggiamento di "ascoltare / imparare" da parte della comunità (1 Tm 2,11; 4,16; 2 Tm 2,14; 3,7.14), che deve portare alla messa in pratica delle opere buone (Tt 3,14; 2 Tm 3,16-17). Saranno dunque condizioni necessarie per diventare vescovo proprio delle qualità didattiche.

Più che una semplice metafora, il motivo della casa propone un modello nuovo e tradizionale di struttura gerarchica, in grado di difendere la comunità contro le forze che la minacciano. Quando la crescita numerica e la complessità crescente dei gruppi cristiani hanno reso di difficile attuazione il modello delle chiese domestiche, la casa diventa metafora, con la funzione di legittimare nuove forme organizzative e una nuova autocomprensione ecclesiastica, pur rimanendo fedele alla tradizione⁽²¹⁾. Nelle protopaoline, il motivo della famiglia è molto presente per esprimere le relazioni tra i membri della comunità⁽²²⁾, eppure le metafore ecclesiastiche sono varie: famiglia, corpo, casa, Tempio. Per quanto riguarda i codici domestici, come detto, la casa non è metafora bensì luogo concreto dell'esercizio della responsabilità quotidiana. Ma verso la fine del secolo in Asia Minore e nell'Egeo, di fronte a rischi di disintegrazione, alla crescita numerica, alla complessità sociale crescente e allo svilupparsi di altri insegnamenti considerati eretici, la metafora della casa funge da concetto unificatore e organizzatore dell'autocomprensione ecclesiale delle EP e della loro paronesi.

⁽²⁰⁾ 1 Tm 5,1: "Non riprendere con asprezza"; 2 Tm 2,25: "Deve istruire con mansuetudine gli oppositori"; 2 Tm 4,2: "insisti in ogni occasione favorevole e sfavorevole, vinci, rimprovera, esorta con ogni tipo di insegnamento e pazienza"; Tt 1,13: "Perciò riprendili severamente, perché siano sani nella fede"; Tt 2,15: "Parla di queste cose, esorta e riprendi con piena autorità. Nessuno ti disprezzi". A questo si aggiunge la terminologia specifica della lotta all'eresia (1 Tm 4,7; 2 Tm 2,16.23; 3,5; Tt 1,11; 3,9.10) intesa come minaccia sulle case.

⁽²¹⁾ WEISER, "Evangelisierung", 80-82; SCHWARZ, *Christentum*, 59, n. 134; SCHOELLGEN, "Hausgemeinden", va nella stessa direzione: si può parlare di "ecclesiologia della casa" ("Oikos-Ekklesiologie") solo a partire dall'EP.

⁽²²⁾ D. VON ALLMEN, *La famille de Dieu. La symbolique familiale dans le paulinisme* (Fribourg – Göttingen 1981).

VII. Lo sguardo di “quelli di fuori”

Abbiamo già indicato più volte la preoccupazione delle EP per il giudizio portato sulle comunità da quelli di “fuori”. Il comportamento domestico e pubblico (in assemblea) dei membri dei diversi gruppi che compongono la comunità è determinante al riguardo. Accanto alla motivazione soteriologica dell’etica — uno stile di vita coerente con la salvezza ricevuta e attesa — si esprime la preoccupazione del giudizio esterno. Il futuro vescovo deve avere “una buona testimonianza da quelli di fuori” (1 Tm 3,7), certi comportamenti, da evitare, potrebbero dare “occasione di maldicenza” (1 Tm 5,14), di “disprezzo della parola di Dio” (Tt 2,5.8.10), screditare “il nome di Dio e l’insegnamento” (1 Tm 6,1).

Il carattere prescrittivo della metafora della casa risponde, dunque, alle minacce di deviazione nell’insegnamento, alle tensioni sociali interne e ai sospetti “da fuori”. L’ordinario e il domestico, con il loro ordine e le loro costrizioni, beni comuni condivisi da tutti, vengono proposti quali momenti di verifica del comportamento di ciascuno.

Questa attenzione forte alla convivenza con la società di allora non è contraddittoria con il messaggio di salvezza universale decisa da sempre da Dio e manifestata in Cristo (1 Tm 1,15; 2,3-7; 2 Tm 1,9-11; 2,8-13; Tt 1,1-4; 2,11-14; 3,3-7), ma la preoccupazione per il rapporto al mondo così com’è, diventa certamente più pressante. C’è coscienza di una coesistenza con il mondo così come è, anche nella durata del tempo che passa. È pensata in modo più articolato. C’è una relazione positiva possibile con il mondo, che non è unicamente di adesione, ma di mutuo rispetto (buone opere: “pronti ad ogni opera buona” Tt 3,1; “mostrando mitezza verso ogni uomo” Tt 3,2). La non aggressione è già auspicabile (1 Tm 6,1; Tt 2,10), ancor meglio “la buona testimonianza da quelli di fuori” (1 Tm 3,7). E poi, la conversione resta, comunque, all’ordine del giorno (1 Tm 1,12-16; Tt 3,3-4).

VIII. Alcune considerazioni conclusive

1. *Etica cristiana?*

Si è spesso chiesto, a proposito delle pastorali, se ci fosse ancora una specificità cristiana in questa proposta etica “domestica” tanto vicina ai valori della società del proprio ambiente. Non dobbiamo dimenticare che nel corso del secondo secolo, per esempio, saranno i detrattori del Cristianesimo ad insistere sulla sua novità minacciosa, mentre chi lo difende ne sottolinea l’accordo con il meglio delle più antiche saggezze e filosofie pagane. Questo ci interroga. C’è un tempo per la rottura e un tempo per prendere la cittadinanza, e l’etica non è mai sganciata dalle condizioni reali della vita.

E comunque, “quelli che vogliono vivere piamente in Cristo...” devono essere pronti ad affrontare sofferenze come Paolo e Timoteo (2 Tm 3,10-13; 1,8.12.16; 2,3.4-7.10.11.12).

2. Etica comunicativa

Il progetto della “casa di Dio” non va letto esclusivamente in termini di “normalizzazione”. La comunità cerca di essere moralmente riconoscibile come casa ben organizzata, ma anche con la sua differenza. Dimostra una certa flessibilità, che le permette di fare posto a nuove relazioni (le vedove e la loro cura, l’organizzazione di un sostegno finanziario, le relazioni tra donne anziane e giovani, una leadership giovane...). Vuole essere il luogo di realizzazione degli ideali più alti della società. La “visibilità” della verità nella comunità prende una forma etica leggibile, anche dall’esterno.

Sul modello dell’itinerario di Paolo (1 Tm 1,12-17), Tt 3,3s ricorda appunto che l’entrata nella casa di Dio ha il significato di una rottura etica: “Anche noi, infatti, siamo stati un tempo insensati, ribelli, fuorviati, asserviti a concupiscenze e voluttà d’ogni genere, vivendo immersi nella malizia e nell’invidia, abominevoli, odiandoci a vicenda. Quando però apparve la benignità del Salvatore nostro Dio e il suo amore per gli uomini...”.

3. Le “vittime” di questa proposta?

Infine, e malgrado quest’ultima osservazione, la nostra interrogazione, di lettori di oggi, deve ripartire da chi ha pagato il prezzo più alto a questa morale domestica applicata alla chiesa, ad una certa moderazione e ad un equilibrio che sono stati certamente vincenti nella storia della chiesa: la donna e lo schiavo, per i quali, più che per altri, la sottomissione è virtù. E, perché no, l’eretico, che esprime un “altro” insegnamento. Queste tre figure continuano ad interrogarci e ad impedire che la casa si chiuda su se stessa.

Ci ricordano che le risposte, anche quelle date dai singoli testi canonici, sono parziali e hanno bisogno di dialogo.

4. Post Scriptum: Ma dov’è finito il “maschio laico”, l’uomo comune?

Ho un *post scriptum*, però. Di solito appunto si conclude la riflessione sulla proposta etico-ecclesiale delle pastorali sottolineando come le donne nella chiesa abbiano pagato il prezzo più alto fin dalla prima ora: sottomissione, estromissione dall’insegnamento e dalla leadership. Senza affatto negare ciò, vorrei attirare l’attenzione su di un’altra “vittima” di questa morale domestica trasferita alla chiesa “casa di Dio”: l’uomo non chierico (non appartenente al clero), non ministro.

Nelle EP, tre sono le figure maschili: i ministri (vescovi, diaconi e anziani: Timoteo e Tito che in un certo modo li rappresentano) che sono oggetto di tutte le attenzioni; poi gli insegnanti dell’“altro insegnamento”, eretici o falsi dottori, oggetto di polemica e squalificati; infine, in un angolino costituito da pochi versetti, l’uomo comune.

Colpisce nelle EP la discrezione con la quale si parla dell’uomo, cioè del maschio “laico”. Nelle esortazioni ai vari gruppi della comunità, quando c’è parallelismo con i codici domestici (1 Tm 2,8; Tt 2,2-10), gli uomini sono appena presenti. Un solo versetto per gli uomini in 1 Tm 2,8 e sette per le donne in 1 Tm 2,9-15. In Tt 2,6-8 una sola esortazione agli uomini giovani espressa nella generica esortazione alla moderazione, subito comunque in-

terrotta per fare posto all'esortazione a Tito: "Esorta similmente i giovani ad essere moderati (σωφρονεῖν), presentando in ogni cosa te stesso come esempio di buone opere, mostrando nell'insegnamento integrità, dignità, incorruttibilità,... linguaggio sano e irreprensibile" (Tt 2,6-7).

Inoltre, diversamente dai codici domestici, gli uomini nelle EP non sono esortati in quanto padri, mariti o padroni, i ruoli specifici nella casa, bensì come porta-virtù generici — moderazione, mitezza ecc. —; mentre figli, mogli e schiavi sono direttamente esortati in quanto tali nei loro ruoli.

Eppure, come abbiamo visto, le qualità abitualmente richieste ai tre ruoli maschili non spariscono: si ritrovano appunto nelle istruzioni per i ministri e i responsabili di comunità (1 Tm 3,1-13; Tt 1,6 cfr. sopra), o più genericamente nelle esortazioni dirette a Timoteo o a Tito in quanto figure di ministri. Nella messa in opera del modello domestico per pensare la chiesa, l'uomo, il maschio significativamente presente nella casa di Dio, è solo il ministro. Tutto accade come se i responsabili della comunità — vescovo, diacono, anziani, Timoteo e Tito — avessero assorbito, risucchiato, tutte le funzioni, i ruoli e le qualità organizzative maschili. L'uomo semplice, comune, senza ruolo ministeriale, sparisce.

Se dunque le donne in genere subiscono, gli schiavi obbediscono e gli uomini comuni spariscono, in questo passaggio dalla casa come descrizione di un ambiente vitale per la comunità cristiana nascente, alla casa come istituzione ecclesiastica, non sono pochi coloro che pagano il dazio alla metaforizzazione.

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* *

L'uso della casa come metafora — quando la chiesa sostituisce la famiglia come centro di appartenenza, di fedeltà, di dipendenza — ha, a ben vedere, due aspetti. L'uno è certamente positivo: permette di fornire un'atmosfera di casa aperta all'esterno, nella quale si può imparare a stare al mondo; apre anche vie di evangelizzazione secondo canali riconosciuti. L'altro è più dannoso. La casa antica, con sfumature diverse a seconda che sia influenzata dalla cultura greca, romana o giudaica, cristallizza — come abbiamo detto per l'archeologia — distinzioni e discriminazioni, limiti sociali e disuguaglianze. Forse anche in questo possiamo vedere il segno di come le Pastorali siano state scritte sotto la spinta delle preoccupazioni di cui abbiamo detto all'inizio: come comportarsi nella casa di Dio, in mezzo ad un mondo sempre più complesso e fonte di conflitti?

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